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**INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY  
AND SEX**





INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY  
AND SEX

BY  
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M.D.

TRANSLATED  
FROM THE GERMAN BY  
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M.D.

WITH  
AN INTRODUCTION BY  
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## INTRODUCTION

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ALTHOUGH it is hoped and believed that *Individual Psychology and Sex* will be read and studied carefully by medical men and women, as well as by those, interested in Psychology, who are not medical practitioners, it is frankly and in all good faith addressed to the larger public as well. It may be thought that medical practitioners, by reason of their training and biological culture, should be at some advantage in the discussion of the problems herein attacked, but no one who appreciates the spirit of Individual Psychology will for one moment desire to claim any special, prescriptive, or privileged right in the matter. On the contrary, he will wish to put such special knowledge as he may possess – whether derived from learning or from experience – at the disposal of his fellows, being persuaded that they will give as freely of their best, in the same spirit.

Indeed, if there is one set of class distinctions which, beyond all others, must be done away with, it is that indicated by the one word *Professionalism*. A profession may well claim particular or special obligations or duties: the time is gone by when any

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profession should claim, or arrogate to itself the right to reserve knowledge, or to exercise authority not granted it by common consent.

It is in this spirit that this book has been written and is offered to the public: it is in this spirit that this brief introduction is given for the sake of those to whom Wexberg's name, and the words *Individual Psychology* convey little if any meaning.

Erwin Wexberg, of Vienna, has been for some years one of the best-known adherents and most successful expositors of that method of thought and practice, in psychology and psychotherapy, associated with the name of ALFRED ADLER of VIENNA, and generally known as INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY.

The present volume is a translation from the original manuscript, made before its recent publication in German, by Dr. Béran Wolfe, one of the most prominent Individual Psychologists of New York, who has collaborated with Wexberg, most successfully, on previous occasions and who has, himself, written very happily on the subject of which he is a master.

Dr. Wolfe's translation has already attained much success in America: the writer of this introductory note, who has been entrusted with the task of preparing an English edition, has confined himself to

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such modifications of phraseology, allusion, and orthography, as have seemed suitable under all the circumstances.

But to return to INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY itself.

Every well-informed person is aware, that during the present century there has taken place a great movement in Psychology which has, directly and indirectly, deeply affected the practice of Medicine. As a result of this movement – often spoken of as that of The New Psychology – new light has been thrown not only upon the origins and nature of many forms of mental illness and disorder, as well as upon those formerly mysterious and certainly troublesome ailments and states referred to as ‘nerves,’ ‘neurasthenia,’ ‘functional illness,’ and the like, but (in the opinion of some of us) also upon the early stages of those processes which, when crystallized – so to speak – are spoken of as ‘organic.’

Now, not only has light been thrown upon these origins and processes; methods of treatment and, if the word be allowed its real meaning, of *cure* (that is, of *care*) have been devised, put into practice, and in many cases attended with the utmost success.

But the matter does not stop here. Great as have been the repercussions throughout the realm of Medicine, *for that very reason*, the repercussions of the New Psychology have been still far more widely

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felt. This must be so when we realize, as we should, that Medicine and Medical Science do not constitute something detached, like an island, away from the continent of human-biological and human-cultural interests, nor even something semi-detached like a Mont St. Michel, accessible during periods of low water, but cut off at other times from the mainland.

No: Medicine is just an inter-dependent part of one wide province – that of all things interesting mankind – *quicquid agunt homines*. And, in the words of the Spanish epigram: He who knows only Medicine does not know *that*.

And so the New Psychology has a message, not only for the doctor but for the lawyer, the parson, the anthropologist, the historian, the statesman, and the schoolmaster, as well as for the man and woman in the street.

In the broadest sense, it may be said that the New Psychology is the outcome of a shift in world-view, of a general movement in world-thought, represented precociously and extravagantly by the revolt, sixty to forty years ago, of Friedrich Nietzsche, son of the pastor at Röcken, near Leipzig. This change in world-view was and is substantially a revolt against circumstances of life, brought about by the nineteenth century over-valuation of systems, codes, conventions and logical forms, and their tyrannical



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imposition on free mankind by the High Priests of Authoritarianism.

The first and most famous expositor of the New Psychology itself is Freud, and Freud is a German Jew from Vienna who, nearly fifty years ago, came under the influence of the French School of Medicine. It was whilst under this influence that Freud took the first steps towards laying the foundations of that great body of thought and practice, *Psychoanalysis*, with which his name is indissolubly connected. It is not necessary to enter here upon a discussion of the doctrine of Psychoanalysis, but the 'really great and imperishable achievement of Sigmund Freud' – I quote Wexberg himself – has been the thesis of 'psychic determinism' which was the real starting point of the Freudian doctrines.

This thesis of 'psychic determinism' is what the public would call the doctrine of the 'unconscious mind,' but is better spoken of as that of 'the possibility of explaining all mental expressions, including those apparently independent of the Will.'

That is to say, we believe that all our actions – our doings and our sayings – even when seemingly inexplicable, are capable of explanation in terms of mental processes, unknown to us at the time.

Thus, if I snap my fingers before my friend's face, his eyelids blink. The explanation given used to be, and often still is, that this blinking is 'instinctive.'

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But now-a-days we will say that the eyelid blinks in order that the eye be protected. The purpose may not be consciously in our mind but is present to our whole self. Now, if I fall into the habit of leaving my keys behind me when returning home, the explanation of 'instinct' is certainly not valid. A few years ago one might have said, as many would still say, 'mere forgetfulness.' Or, perhaps, 'you want a holiday.' But to give a name or even to suggest a remedy does not really *explain*. On the other hand, the thesis of psychic determinism helps me to find a reason for my persistently forgetting my keys. I find this reason in the *purpose* fulfilled by the loss: I am thereby symbolically if not practically, shut out from my home. And then I come to realize that *that* is what 'I' do desire to be, even though I may not have previously admitted it to 'myself.'

Now, shortly before the War, two great men amongst others were closely associated with Freud in the development of Psychoanalysis: C. G. Jung of Zürich, and Alfred Adler of Vienna. First Adler, however, and then Jung, ceased to be thus associated, each developing special lines of thought and practice in divergence from those of the Freudian Psychoanalytic Union. (The School and Theory developed by Jung, that of Analytical Psychology, does not further concern us here: our interest is with Indi-

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vidual Psychology as developed by Adler, his friends and pupils, in Austria, Germany, America, England and elsewhere.)

Stated in this way, we see, not that Adler and Jung have been or are, malcontents driven, or dissenters seceding, from a Freudian fold, but that we should look upon the movements connected with the names of Freud, Adler, Jung, and others, as currents, or waves, in the great world-tide of which Nietzsche in Germany was a portent or sign. *Origins* are less easily estimated than we may think, and neither the lesser nor the greater straws and planks carried down stream are the cause of the flood that bears them forward! Even such outlying manifestations as the spread of Christian Science in America, and the like, are all related to the great change of which I have written, and must be allotted their own significance.

But, in order that the thought and methods of Individual Psychology be understood, some further explanation is needed, especially of its relation to Psychoanalysis.

Briefly put, Individual Psychologists aim at the close observation of the lives and conduct and interests of all human beings: at the simplest possible interpretation of their behaviour; and at the simplest possible expressions in language of the notions which we form. For all these reasons the reproach is constantly made that Individual Psychology is too

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simple, is superficial, is the psychology of common sense, the psychology of the man, woman, and child in the street. We reply: Yes, but the simplest explanations are often the most profoundly based, and the intuitive wisdom of the child and of the 'pure in heart' anticipates the final conclusions of the truest philosophers. By the 'pure in heart' is meant, in this connection, those whose vision is not distorted by sophistical and conventional intellectual constructions: the real Fall of Man dates from the substitution of these constructions, for the simple intuitions common to all mankind.

We find the child, born into this world, the most helpless of living creatures and, so we may believe, less at the mercy of his inheritance so far as his future life is concerned, than at that of those who surround him during his earliest years. Whatever the original *material* and its biological value, the future life of the child depends largely upon the use he makes of this material, under the circumstances of his environment, and his *choice* in this respect is (objectively) determined by the treatment he undergoes in these early years, formative of what we call his 'life-style,' his 'life-goal,' his 'prototype.' He may be the subject of an organ-inferiority, he may be snubbed, he may be pampered. He may be a spoilt only child or a dethroned firstborn, or again

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the neglected and unwanted middle-term of a large and straggling family. In any case, he will resent his dependence, his weakness, his insecurity, or his lack of 'masculinity.' He may then determine, perhaps to overcome, perhaps to compensate, his inferiority. He may attempt to gain security, and domination over others, by any of a thousand neurotic tricks and dodges, or he may retreat into disease and the blankness of dementia. There is a kaleidoscopic infinity of possible variations and modalities and *nuances*: an illimitable gamut on which changes may be rung. This is why we speak of *Individual Psychology*: we are concerned with individuals, not with classes, generalities, and closed systems, save as temporary conveniences.

Now, as the individual passes through life, he or she – and Individual Psychology recognizes to the full the intrinsic equivalence socially, of man and woman – of equal values though with different social functions – he or she is faced with three great demands or problems: those of Subsistence, Society, and Sex. There is the task of *securing* the means of livelihood – that task is incumbent even on those who are born rich: there is the task of *establishing* those social relations with others without which life is deprived of its real meaning, value, and significance – and this involves the daily adjustment of personal to social needs; and there is the further task

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— that which now concerns us — of *adapting* the sexual urge to social circumstances and in social interests.

Now, as Individual Psychologists, we say, not that the sexual problem is the most important or even the basic problem of Psychology and Sociology, but that it happens to be one of the most interesting and the most important of problems, because it is the least *understood*. It is the least understood because its solution, for individuals as for groups, has been rendered infinitely difficult during ages, by the pressure of authoritarianism and lust for power, more especially by the lust for compensatory power of those who are sexually weak or at disadvantage, by reason of age or other inferiority.

It follows, moreover, that Individual Psychologists regard the style of any individual's solution of his own sexual problems as an indication of his general life-style. So we approach the paradox, which is not really a paradox, that each man's and each woman's sexual difficulties exemplify their ways of dealing with non-sexual difficulties. Further, any *ad hoc* solution of a sexual problem, for any man or woman, is seen to afford only temporary relief, inasmuch as unless the whole style of life is appreciated by the individual the error leading to the original difficulty will be repeated on subsequent occasions, whether

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the later problems be social, sexual, or those of subsistence. Nevertheless one or two very general statements may profitably be made. Since the origin of all neurosis is in the choice of reaction to difficulty under the stress of an inferiority sense, it follows, almost of necessity, that while *discouragement* is the worst of remedies, *encouragement* to helpful, personal effort, is the best.

What is often called sexual vice, or sexual depravity, is almost invariably an expression of personal unhappiness, or of despair, and an attempt to regain self-confidence, provoked by the consciousness of inadequate social adaptation, itself the outcome of inadequate training for social, and, *a fortiori*, sexual co-operation and life. And, bitterly enough, no discouragement is so provocative of these personal expressions as is that received at the hands of parents, priests, and pedagogues, whose voices are most loudly raised in condemnation of the 'vices' that they actively if unwittingly procure. If this is the keynote of Wexberg's book and its chief lesson, it is one that should be of untold value to parents, priests, physicians, and pedagogues. Even if, after all, congenital tendencies towards homosexuality or what-not *do* count for something, for more than we may care to think, how much better NOT to say so to the victim, but to encourage him or her to increased personal effort, and to extend all the comradely

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benevolence and goodwill of which he or she will stand in need, if really such a victim, no less than if, as is almost certainly the case, the early years of childhood have been passed under the shadow, perhaps of terrorism, perhaps of ignorance, perhaps of prohibition, and perhaps of pampering.

We are tempted to assert, indeed, that the real tragedy for mankind was not the disobedience of our first parents in the Garden of Eden, but the prohibition laid upon them in their ignorance of the knowledge of good and evil. Had they possessed such knowledge, they would truly have been as gods, knowing good from evil. And, had they known good from evil, would they have sinned? Or, have been unhappy?

From this brief account it will come to be understood how profound is the divergence between Individual Psychology and the Freudian Psychoanalysis with its insistence upon the twin doctrines of the *libido* and pan-sexualism. Not only is there this divergence in psychological theory, but there is a correlating divergence in the technique of the treatment of neurosis, as well as in pedagogy, and in sociological outlook. Not only are there these present and apparent divergencies, but there are deeper differences in the philosophical and metaphysical



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foundations of each school, differences that are themselves of tremendous significance.

It is no part of the function of the present writer to dwell upon these, but they should be appreciated – or at any rate, their existence should be – lest a great deal of the significance of Wexberg's book escape the general reader. Of the content of the book itself little need be said other than what is in the sincerest fashion commendatory. It is a book that may and should be read by everyone: it is easy to understand, and is written without offence. The second part thereof is of particular value to social students and to medical men, as well as to all who are in personal tribulation, for in it special problems are dealt with straightforwardly, sympathetically, and helpfully. With every word of this the present writer would express his most cordial agreement, not hesitating to say that the introduction of these teachings into medical, educational, and sociological practice must be of the highest possible value to individuals, and, what in this case is the same thing, as making for social happiness.

But the first, and no less valuable part of the book is in another key. Perhaps the note is well given in a phrase employed by ADLER himself during his visit to London this year, when he defined 'to be in love' as to be 'more interested in another than in oneself.' In this definition we find concealed the distinction

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between that love which, seeking to secure the happiness of another, finds physical expression in the finest sexual union, and those desires which have as their object the purchase of personal pleasure rather than the security of another's happiness.

INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY  
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## CHAPTER I

### SEXUALITY

SEX, in the modern world, is judged by a double standard. Were a primitive savage to visit Europe or America to learn something of our sexual customs, he would be faced with an almost insuperable task. He would find, on the one hand, that sex played an insignificant rôle in our habits, speech, and social life: he would be compelled, indeed, to look sharply and to listen well to find any evidence of the existence of sex, and it would be difficult to detect the living rhythm of sexual life behind the mask of indifference which our custom has decreed. Once he had pierced our smoke-screen of apparent apathy toward sex – in viewing the intimate lives of two lovers, or in discussing the psychology and biology of sex as it affects the daily lives of modern men and women – he would discover sex as the dominant motive force, compared to which all our other vital activities were of very minor importance. This strange juxtaposition of asexualism and pansexualism has become such an obvious part of our daily pattern of life that we hardly recognize it as a paradox, and but seldom realize that the paradox is a mystery to boot.

The symptomatic significance of the 'all-or-none' principle of our sexual life is not to be taken lightly.

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Despite arduous efforts, modern men and women betray their inability to achieve a satisfactory solution of the sex problem of our times, not only in the typically 'moral' attitude that sex really does not exist as a problem, but also in making sex the object of 'dirty' stories, as well as in the tendency to allow themselves to become passive straws in the torrents of sensual passion. It is an illusion, moreover, to believe that we moderns have made progress in the solution of the sexual problem: a psychologist, comparing primitive and civilized communities, could hardly demonstrate a growth of sexual adjustment and understanding parallel with the social, technical, and cultural status of modern civilization, although it would be fallacious to consider modern sexual life as a regression or a degeneration from the status of primitive man.

The truth of the matter is that the solution of sexual problems varies widely with circumstances, time and geography. It need hardly amaze us that the business of effecting a sexual adjustment becomes increasingly difficult, and the results of the adjustment we do succeed in making become increasingly unsatisfactory, in a civilization whose social, economic, cultural and ideological evolution progresses in a constantly accelerating *tempo*. The increasing uncertainty of success in our trial attempts at solution is leading us, moreover, to a sexual crisis: sex is no longer a natural function whose solution is obvious:

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simple and natural activities which comprise the sexual life express themselves in distorted and tormented forms; and in the last analysis our modern man, possessed of the most complicated culture, and master of the most exquisite technology, must stand in shame before common animals that solve their sexual problems with the same matter-of-fact unconcern as that wherewith they eat and sleep, unconscious of the tragedy and anxiety that burdens human beings when they love.

Nevertheless, it is hardly advisable to shrug our shoulders, fold our hands disconsolately in our laps, and let things go on as they are without a gesture of protest, in pessimistic hopelessness and the blind trust that God who is really responsible for everything, will surely not forsake mankind. If it is written in the Book of Destiny that we are to have difficulties in solving our present baffling sexual problems, there is also a footnote in the Book that indicates that we shall never cease to search for psychological mastery of the problem. The footnote goes inevitably with the text, and none may say that there is neither sense nor reason in it.

The foregoing remarks serve as an introduction to the proposal that we apply the theories and practice of Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology to the increasingly heated discussions of modern sexual problems. Many have believed that Individual Psy-

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chology, which originated in the geographic and philosophic neighbourhood of Freudian psychoanalysis, contrasts an artificial asexualism to the undoubted pansexualism of the Freudians, by explaining the facts of the individual's sexual life as arrangements of a will-to-power derived from an underlying feeling of inferiority. Others have thought that Adler considered the very substance of the sexual life an empty fiction as compared with the 'absolute truth' of the vital social feeling. Some, who misunderstood Adler's emphasis on the social feeling, attempted to ridicule Adler's teaching as appropriate only for old maids and confirmed bachelors. As a matter of fact, nothing could be farther from the truth. Despite the fact that one may find an occasional piece of excitedly polemic writing issuing from the pen of an Individual Psychologist which seems to confirm this fallacy, anyone who studies Individual Psychology seriously, must realize that Adler views biological facts as facts, and makes no attempt whatsoever to divest natural phenomena of their reality.

Adler and the Individual Psychologists recognize sex for just what it is: a group of physiological functions and tendencies more or less directly related to the biologic datum of the bi-sexual reproduction of the human race. It is extremely difficult to make a sharp differentiation between the sexual and non-



sexual phenomena in a certain psychophysical zone, but it seems entirely unjustifiable to relinquish the specificity of the concept of sex as a phenomenon related to reproduction, and to consider everything which is actually or potentially related to the experience of pleasure as sexual, as psychoanalysis does for this reason. In the moment we leave the solid ground of biological purposiveness, we leave scientific terra firma and become unwitting victims of undisciplined speculation.

It will repay us to exercise especial caution in the discussion of the pleasure factor in the sexual experience, and its biological basis, sexual sensitivity and sensuality. Sensuality in general may be defined as the ability to derive pleasure from sensory stimuli. Sensuality, furthermore, includes the positive emotional components of sensation, that is, it excludes un-pleasure or pain. It is well known, to be sure, that pleasure and un-pleasure are frequently indistinguishably merged, that pleasurable sensations may simultaneously be tinged with un-pleasure or even with pain, and vice versa. We are concerned solely with the sensation of pleasure in discussing the problem of sensuality.

### *Sex and Pleasure*

Pleasure may be directly and uncompromisingly related to simple sensation, as in the realm of taste

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where certain stimuli evoke the sensation of 'sweet.' Pleasure may, furthermore, follow directly on a sensation which is no longer elementary but presupposes the apperception of an object, as in our sensation of 'soft.' Pleasure, finally, may be associated with the removal of a stimulus by an appropriate act, as the abolition of the sensation of tickling or itching by scratching. It is not essential that the first sensation, such as itching, be an unpleasant one, and the pleasurable of scratching is not directly derivative from the annoyance of itching. As a matter of fact the irritation of the sexual organs, which is closely related to the sensation of itching, is usually felt as pleasurable in itself, and yet its satisfaction by means of the friction which leads to orgasm is attended by a positive pleasure-feeling. In the case of scratching after itching, as in the cycle of the sexual experience, we are concerned with a rhythmical succession which may be plotted in a definite curve, consisting in an ascending curve which culminates in the acme followed by a rapidly descending curve.

The satisfaction of hunger or thirst shows a similar rhythmic succession although the curve is different, consisting in an immediate rise to the acme and a gradual descent. This would seem to indicate that in the case of hunger and thirst we were dealing solely with the removal of a feeling of un-pleasure, and not with a positive pleasure sensation, as the

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pleasurable sensations associated with eating and drinking, the taste of good food, and the satisfaction consequent to the moistening of the dried-up mucous membrane of the throat, have nothing to do with hunger and thirst as such. A curve which consists of a gradual rise and a rapid descent seems peculiar to only two forms of sensory satisfaction: itching and sex; and it may well be that the sexual stimulus is from a phylogenetic point of view no more than a specifically differentiated form of itching.

There are, however, more complex sensations which are conditioned by the apperception of objects. We have already mentioned the sensation of 'soft,' which is not far removed from an elementary pleasure sensation, but in the apperception of odours which we associate with the imagination of tasty foods, the pleasure sensation is definitely conditioned by objects. These odours are not in themselves pleasant and may even be unpleasant: they derive their pleasure quality from the imagination of a future enjoyment which they seem to indicate. We call such sensations 'fore-pleasurable' and sexual pleasure sensations conditioned by similar apperceptions may be grouped with them, and Freud indeed coined the word 'fore-pleasure' to describe them.

The sensations of softness and warmth which derive from the touching of a body, are themselves moderately pleasant, partially elementary and par-

tially apperceptive sensations, which become intense fore-pleasures when the individual perceives that they originate from contact with a person of the opposite sex. Vasomotor and muscular reflexes of the genital zone, which may occasionally be pleasurable in themselves although they are of an elementary nature, may be focussed for the intensification of local pleasurable sensations. Fore-pleasure is characterized by its unequivocal purposiveness as an indicator of the path toward the chief-pleasure and this is as valid in the realm of sex as in the realm of eating, where the odour of obviously tasty food leads directly to the taking of food. The interpretation of fore-pleasure in terms of biological purpose is not difficult; fore-pleasure is the bait with which nature lures the individual to the fulfilment of a necessary biological function. The allure of fore-pleasure in the realm of smell is very apparent, especially in animals whose search for food is almost completely dependent upon their olfactory sense. Fore-pleasure has, therefore, a well-defined, biologically interpretable purpose.

The chief pleasure associated with the vital functions must also be interpretable, moreover, in terms of biological purpose. Freud and his followers have interpreted the value of the chief-pleasure as a 'pleasure-premium.' According to Freud, the purpose of this intense chief-pleasure is to guarantee the

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exercise of the sexual function. It is true that the exercise of the principal vital functions is more or less associated with pleasurable sensations, while in the case of the sexual function the pleasure sensation is most intense, perhaps because the goal of reproduction, a matter of indifferent interest to the individual, must be guaranteed by an especially high pleasure-premium; the ingestion of food, however, and in a lesser degree the functions of excretion, locomotion, the maintenance of the bodily heat, and the removal of living and dead foreign bodies from the skin as in itching and scratching, are not without pleasurable sensations.

One important objection to this purposive concept of physiological mechanisms, however, must be refuted before we can proceed. It is not difficult to understand the function of fore-pleasure as a stimulus to the practice of some biologically desirable act, especially when the fore-pleasure leads more or less directly to the consummation of the act. If this biologically desirable consummation, however, is to be carried out *for the sake of* the pleasure-premium, we just premise the pre-existence of a similar experience. We may assume that this previous experience exists in the realm of nutrition in many animals and in man because the young are fed by the parents during their earliest infancy, thus becoming aware of good and bad foods without any independent

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activity on their part. In the case of lower animals where such parent-directed training is out of the question, we must assume the existence of a congenital chemical attraction which is inherited as part of the phylogenetic or racial reflex mechanism of the organism. But what is the explanation of the existence of the pleasure-premium in the realm of sex? Some experience is the necessary prerequisite of the effectiveness of the pleasure-premium. But this experience is not gained passively during infancy, as in the case of nutrition, because animals usually are separated from their parents before sexual maturity; even among modern peoples, where the adolescent may still be living with his family at the time of sexual maturation, it is not customary for adults to initiate children into sexual act. Yet it is inconceivable that a 'pleasure-premium' can be an effective motive for copulation unless some previous sexual experience has occurred!

### *The Inheritance of Sexual Mechanisms*

If we turn from the patently complicated relationships that exist among modern men and investigate the situation among mammals in general, we will be at a loss to explain existing sex phenomena without assuming the existence of a phylogenetic or racial inherited reflex mechanism. There is indeed no other explanation for the fact that an animal, directed

to the act of sexual copulation by the experience of fore-pleasure, consummates that act without any previous training or experience. In the light of what we know of reflex mechanisms there is one point in these mysterious and inexplicable circumstances of which we may be certain: sexual satisfaction via ipsation<sup>1</sup> is easily conceivable. We know that an analogy exists in the common scratch-reflex of dogs: if we stimulate the abdominal skin on one side the dog responds with a reflex attempt to scratch the abdomen with the hind leg of the same side. The sole remarkable aspect of this reflex is that the *effect* of the pleasure-tinged scratching which we see acts retroactively and evokes the scratch-movements which ordinarily would precede the scratching-sensation. Nevertheless, there can be little doubt of the reflex character of these movements even in those cases where they follow actual itching; and what is valid for the itch-stimulation is probably equally valid for the closely associated sexual stimulus. As a matter of fact one may observe indubitable reflex ipsation in dogs.

The one fact that we cannot conveniently link with our knowledge of reflexes is that animals definitely strive to consummate the act of copulation without any previous training. This is especially

<sup>1</sup> *Ipsation* is the word now used to indicate self-relief from sexual tension, or sexual self-gratification.—F.G.C.

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true of male animals which assume the aggressive rôle among the mammalia. How does the male organism 'know' that the female has the appropriate organ which serves as the most intense source of pleasure to his genital organ? How does it 'know' how to use that organ? There is no real answer to this question. To use the word 'instinct' is simply to label something we do not understand, without in the least explaining what happens. Even when we speak of a 'phylogenetic memory' we have only described the phenomenon in terms of an analogy without explaining it, that is, without actually referring it to matters we understand.

If then, as it seems, we cannot explain the origin of the sex act without the assumption of an inherited instinct or of a phylogenetic memory, it would seem quite unnecessary to premise the existence of the purposive function of fore-pleasure or of the chief-pleasure itself. We might in consequence easily attribute the capacity to effect the repetition of the sexual act, without the intervention of any pleasure mechanism, to this marvellous sexual 'instinct' which is capable of effecting, not only the approach of one sex to the other, but even the consummation of the complicated act of copulation. What then is the sense of pleasure?



## PURPOSE OF SEXUAL PLEASURE

### *The Purpose of Sexual Pleasure*

If we admit the completely purposive structure of all nature we must conclude that sexual pleasure cannot be without its purpose. It is surely conceivable that the supreme accomplishment of the sexual instinct, the consummation of a previously unpractised act of copulation, may be effected only when the sexual act is made practically compulsory, especially if such a consummation were possible only once in an individual life. We may then consider it the function of fore-pleasure to bring two sexually differentiated individuals together the *first* time for the purpose of consummating the copulatory act, whereas the chief-pleasure of the sexual act itself is designed to guarantee the repetition of the act, independently of the instinct. We can now unravel the mystery easily from this point. The mechanism of fore-pleasure is intensified by training. The realization of the chief-pleasure associated with the act of copulation itself causes impressions, related by association with the imagination of the sex partner, to partake of the character of fore-pleasure. The training follows the general laws of the conditioned reflex. We may assume that the dog used in Pavlov's experiments, whose gastric fistula was stimulated to secretion when a bell signaling the fact that he was to be fed was rung, experienced pleasure at the

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ringing of the bell. In this case the acoustic signal is incorporated in the fore-pleasure mechanism.

The sexual fore-pleasure spreads itself to all the sensory fields in quite a similar manner, once training has been initiated by the first experience. Reference from the sensory fields to the sexual object is quite possible by association, memory, and imagination. The total perceptual and reproductive apparatus becomes, so to speak, facultatively sexualized in man because, by virtue of his completer brain structure, he commands a far richer repertoire of associational possibilities than any animal. We may assume, therefore, that his sexual fore-pleasure mechanism is far more extensive, and covers a wider variety of psychic functions than does that of any other living organism. Should one wish to conclude that for these reasons man is 'more sexual' than other animals the conclusion would not be without justification: confirmation for this might indeed be found in the fact that man possesses a readiness for sexual relations which, while it varies in the individual, is not, as in the case of the 'rutting period' of other animals, definitely related to certain seasons of the year, but is constant and continuous – a new acquisition of the race, which in itself could account to a great extent for the existence of a 'sexual problem' in man. The biological reason for the existence of this sexual problem, moreover, is to be found in the observation

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that organs and organ-systems which have been modified in structure and function in (phylogenetically) recent epochs are frequently points of lessened resistance. In the case of man, the change to erect posture and the consequent adjustment of the internal organs to this change, plays an important rôle.

(In this connection it is to be noted that modern biologists using the purposive point of view explain the origin of modesty in mankind by the fact that in the change from a four-footed gait – in which the genital organs are carefully protected – to an erect gait, man lost this natural protection, and as a result the necessity for an artificial protection arose simultaneously. This is, to be sure, a hypothetical explanation, especially in view of the fact that numerous primitive peoples seemingly exist very well without any sexual modesty, but the biological reasoning seems logical.)

We must admit that we have not learned much about the psychology of human sensuality from this brief sketch of the biology of the sexual function, but psychology must be based on biological facts, and must follow logically and directly upon them. We deemed it necessary, therefore, to orientate the reader on the nature of the biological raw material upon which sexual psychology rests. In this special field we have demonstrated that well-known thesis which is the very essence of Adler's Individual

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Psychology: 'the purposiveness of all biological and psychological phenomena' is the only valid concept in the explanation of biological data; we are not astonished therefore to find in it the generally accepted method of scientific investigation. Biological purposiveness proves itself inadequate however in the explanation and interpretation of human behaviour, even when we conceive it as complemented by those specifically human acquisitions, social and rational purposiveness, which though similar to biological purposiveness (finality) are dominant to it in human life.<sup>1</sup> (Wexberg's principle of 'finality' or purposiveness has been variously designated by other authors. Adler himself has called it 'immanent teleology,' Briffault and others have referred to it as 'conation' from the Latin *conor*, to strive for, while McDougall, after Nunn, has called it the 'hormic principle.') The principle of 'personal purposiveness,' which dominates the entire hierarchy of man's conative tendencies, enables us to interpret human behaviour from the standpoint of a purposive unity of the personality which utilizes the biological, social, and rational data and conations as raw material. In other words, we may formulate our views thus: From the point of view of the personal goal, the biological, social and rational conations are causal, in much the

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Individual Psychology* by Erwin Wexberg, translated by W. Béran Wolfe, M.D. George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1930.

## PURPOSE VERSUS CAUSE

same way that physical and chemical data are causal from the point of view of biological purposiveness. (We do not know whether physical and chemical data may be interpreted from a purposive point of view, and this must remain entirely a metaphysical problem.)

### *Purpose versus Cause*

Let us bring the matter closer to our sexual theme: a specific sexual act may be consummated by a specific individual only *because* he is in control of the requisite sexual organization. When we say "sexual organization" we simultaneously imply the biological purposiveness of sex, but the relation of the sexual organization to the particular sexual act is of necessity expressed as a causal one. Should we allow biological purposiveness to dominate the picture, and say, the specific sexual act was carried out as a part of the strategy of nature to attain its goal of reproduction, we should be, in all probability, making a mistake, although we could not disallow this in any concrete case, for we know that the goal of reproduction is, in general, the appropriate terminus of biological purposiveness. The phrase '*in order to serve the purpose of reproduction,*' should be interpreted solely as an expression of a personal motivation; this personal motivation, however, may be – and in the majority of cases is – quite different from the

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terminus of the biological conation. The appropriate sexual organization, nevertheless, remains the fundamental premise which enables the individual, for whatever motive, to consummate a sexual act.

These theoretic considerations may be illustrated by the following cases: Mr. N. has just married *in order* to carry out his obligation as a citizen. The premise that he has the appropriate sexual organization to marry must, of course, be taken for granted. Or, let us say, Mr. N. has just married, for purely rational motives, *in order* to legalize his sexual relations to Miss M., in which case, again, we presuppose he has the necessary sexual organization to accomplish his purpose. On the other hand, social or even rational purposes become causes when a conflict exists between them and the personal purpose, and no identification of personal, social and rational conations obtains. As an example, let us say society forbids incest *in order* to prevent inbreeding. (It is doubtful whether this is true, but we shall assume that it is.) Mr. N., who loves his daughter, does not marry her *because* society forbids such a union. Society's purpose in preventing inbreeding is a matter of relative indifference to Mr. N. It is more probable that Mr. N. does not marry his daughter *in order* to avoid conflict with the society to which he belongs; that is, *in order* to avoid punishment.

These theoretical considerations may seem unnec-

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essary to the reader, but they are quite essential to the understanding of our thesis, that the psychological discussion of any given sexual act is not satisfactorily concluded when we have 'explained' it in terms of the 'sex drive' or 'libido.' This is the method of Freudian psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis falls into this error, moreover, when it 'explains' some specific sexual act, such as a perversion, as the persistence of a 'partial libido' or an 'infantile libido.' This persistence of a 'partial libido' – granted that 'partial libido' in the Freudian sense actually exists – would still require a biological explanation. An inherited anomaly of the sexual organs might be the basis of such an assumption, in which case the causality of the inherited status would be sufficient to prevent modification by the personal purpose, and persist as in certain forms of endogenous insanity. In such a situation the perversion would be incorporated in the purposive unity of the personality, but it would determine the pattern of that personality to a large extent. Such a case is conceivable, but empirically it does not exist, with the exception of the very insignificant group of homosexuals bearing the stigmata of physical hermaphroditism.

### *A Criticism of the Freudian Concept of Sex*

Psychoanalysts, however, do not assume that there is a physical and hereditary basis for the per-

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sistence of an infantile libido. They are more prone to link the infantile libido with experiences of early childhood, as in a case of homosexuality where the patient's homosexuality would be explained by an incestuous attachment to the parent of the same sex. How does such an incestuous relationship occur? A boy is pampered by his father while he is treated badly by his mother. Other factors may well have driven the boy toward homosexuality but the following proposition is valid: sexual causation has nothing whatsoever to do with his deviation. Is the boy compelled by his sexuality to fall in love with his father under these given circumstances? Not at all. Circumstances lead him to this close bond with his father because it appears as his only possible course. Does he take the path toward homosexuality because he wants to allow his partial or infantile libido to work itself out? Why just *this* partial libido? *Because* circumstances suggest it to him. Now we have completed the circle. The boy seeks a fixation on his father in order to have a father fixation, or as the psychoanalysts would have it, in order to fixate his homosexual libido upon his father, which comes to the same thing. *Opium facit dormire quia est in eo virtus dormitiva*. Opium puts us to sleep because it contains a sleep-producing principle!

The truth of the matter is that we must understand the general purpose and goal of the boy's life



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in order to interpret his fixation on the father, finding the specific circumstances which would express themselves in a father fixation in this concrete case. We could understand the fixation if we knew that this boy needed to reinforce all available supports to his sense of self-esteem because of discouragement in his general striving for significance. If we understand the child's alignment with his father in terms of his striving for security, we should still have to investigate why his father fixation turned into homosexuality. It is only when we ask this question that we really can arrive at significant conclusions. The psychoanalysts, however, investigate no further when they have discovered the 'source' of homosexuality in an 'infantile libido fixation' because they have been taught that this is the real cause of the condition. Psychoanalysts are so blinded by their belief in the sexual cause of all mental maladjustments that they are incapable of seeing any other relationships. In truth an aberration of sexual conduct can be interpreted only when we have discovered the non-sexual goals of personal conation. That sexuality plays an important rôle in human life is beyond all question, but if we try to explain sex and sexuality in terms of sex and sexuality, we become involved in a vicious circle from which there is no escape. It is due to the dominance of this belief in the sexual cause of mental disease, as it is taught by psychoanalysts, that

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neurotics of both sexes, married and unmarried, male and female, are urged to attempt sexual relations. It is not only the poorly trained psychoanalysts who advise this – the most famous Freudian disciples make the same mistake. Now if these neurotics could have sexual relations, they would, presumably, not be neurotics. But sometimes they actually succeed, carry out the advice of the psychoanalyst, make crass failures of their marriages, and remain as sick as they were before they consulted the psychoanalyst!

The essential source of psychoanalytic pansexualism is to be found in the patients themselves. We have already mentioned the fact that the purposiveness of the biological organism becomes the causality of the individual. It is very easy to sense this causality as a compelling force. If we forget the goal-directed conative unity of the personality for a moment, it does appear as though an individual were no more than an unwitting football being kicked about by his 'drives' and instincts. The individual who believes this belongs to that large class that suffers from its inborn sexuality and sensuality. To be sure, sexuality and sensuality are biological facts, and it is theoretically possible that the physiological mechanisms underlying sensuality may vary in individuals and that there may be various degrees of sensuality. There is some evidence that such differences are based on constitutional types.

## THE MEANING OF PASSION

In those days when women were used almost entirely as a source of male pleasure – and such times are not yet entirely gone – connoisseurs of women developed complicated rules for deducing whether a woman was passionate or not from external evidence. Unfortunately these rules seldom agreed. Some believed that brunettes with thick lips and large breasts were especially passionate, while others found slender blondes most desirable. Some said that certain women looked ‘sensual’ on the grounds of some intuitive feeling for physiognomy which seldom proved accurate. Havelock Ellis has written a great deal about these matters. Much as one must distrust unscientific data in this sphere of knowledge, modern science with its investigation of constitutional pathology, and the relation between physical structure and temperament, should prevent us from pushing our scepticism too far. There is a certain probability that some of the assumptions of popular psychology concerning human behaviour and human nature may be explained and sanctioned by science at some later time.

### *The Meaning of Passion*

Let us assume therefore that there are variations in the sexual passion. Are we justified for this reason in believing that the quality and quantity of the sexual activity of an individual is a product of his

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particular degree of sensuality? Certainly not, because this sexual activity is only partly determined by his personal constitution, and for the greater part is entirely dependent upon the external possibilities of sexual satisfaction. It might be urged that in a situation in which a group of human beings were deprived of normal sexual outlets the more 'highly sexed' individual would demonstrate his constitutional variation by suffering more than the individual with a less well-developed sexuality. The World War taught us some interesting lessons on this very subject. Millions of healthy young men in their sexual prime were kept at the front for months and years without the possibility of sexual intercourse. It soon appeared that in open warfare where the scene and its dangers changed rapidly, sexuality played absolutely no rôle whatsoever, and it mattered very little how long sexual abstinence was enforced under these circumstances; sexual abstinence was no more irksome in the sixth month than in the first week of a campaign, for the soldiers acted as if they were sexless beings so long as their lives were endangered by the military situation.

Sexuality emerged as soon as the mobile front was replaced by trench warfare, and boredom took the place of fear. The growing frequency of lascivious talk among the men was its first sign. Occasionally – albeit not generally – homosexual practices were

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discovered, and masturbation (or, ipsation), the exact extent of which cannot well be determined, was indulged in more frequently. The whole picture changed as soon as troops were retired from the front line for convalescence or recovery to some point of lesser danger, where women could be found. Officers and men threw themselves on the women, without consideration of the great dangers of venereal infection, and usually without the least attempt at discrimination between one woman and another, like a pack of starved animals. In many cases these soldiers discovered that their long period of abstinence had affected their potency, although this was usually a passing disability. In the cases in which it did exist there was a true *impotentia coeundi*, with an inadequate erection or complete inability to consummate intercourse.

How shall we interpret these facts? Our first point is that sexuality is largely influenced by the individual's style of life. Such intense physical and mental distractions as open warfare can completely suppress all sexual appetites, with no practical individual differences in degree. Sexual desire is awakened again only when the individual is neither distracted nor strained. Under these circumstances the sexual instinct breaks out with primitive force when conditions favourable for its satisfaction supervene. Here again the degree of variation among

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individuals is negligible. Men who did not avail themselves when the opportunities for sexual intercourse were offered were not men who were less 'highly sexed,' but anxious creatures who never would have dared even under normal conditions to seek a prostitute, much less under these circumstances where the danger of venereal infection was really much greater; or men whose organization was so sensitized that they shuddered at the unleashed bestiality of their fellows, and refused sexual intercourse as a matter of intellectual conviction; or those who refused to satisfy their sexual needs because of *their* desire to remain faithful to a wife or sweetheart at all costs. To sum up: the motives for any man's sexual behaviour must be sought in his individual goal in life, and this goal-idea is prepotent far beyond the uttermost boundaries of sexuality. Fear, sensitivity, or fidelity in other words, are more powerful than sex.

One might object that the motives offered by the men who refused intercourse are nothing more than specious rationalizations, proffered because they were consciously acceptable: that in reality men who refused opportunities for sexual gratification were actually 'less highly sexed.' This may be rebutted: these men needed no pretexts for abstaining – they could as easily have said they had no desire. We may add, moreover, that a belief in the insuperable com-

pulsion of an irresistible sexual urge may be considered (at least as rightly, and perhaps with greater right) as a pretext of consciousness to camouflage sexual acts which outrage many of the finer feelings. Furthermore, we can derive no general laws of human behaviour from the conduct of individuals whether in the relatively abnormal circumstances of the war, or in normal pre-war conditions. Many a soldier who neglected his wife before the war was promiscuous in his sexual relations during the war, and vice versa, many a man who abstained from sexual contact during the war, was anything but a sexual ascetic before entering the service.

### *The Relativity of Sexual Behaviour*

The inevitable conclusion is that the sexual behaviour of a man is due not to variations in his sexual constitution, but to other, non-sexual motives. This idea presents several possibilities of further research. One which we found of practical importance is this: there are some people who consider deprivations as if they were personal insults; they demand the greatest possible pleasures as if they were their holy rights. Such men and women exaggerate every joy, not alone sexual pleasures, and practise a veritable religion of enjoyment, feeling themselves oppressed, inferior, and neglected by all the gods, when they are deprived of their desired quota of enjoyment.

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The hunger for enjoyment is the cornerstone of their sense of self-esteem, so that their striving for significance and the satisfactions of their pleasure-hunger are identical. It is apparent that such men seize pleasure wherever they can find it, no matter what the cost to their own or some other individual's health.

Because any behaviour which outrages not only the social feeling but sound common sense, must in some way be justified, we find that these are the very individuals who subscribe most unconditionally to a belief in the primacy of the natural instincts, and these are the men who know how to arrange their experiences so that they apparently justify and exonerate their beliefs. There is little doubt that one may increase sexual tension to such a pitch by the appropriate use of phantasy that the irresistibility of the sexual desire is experienced as an uncompromising reality. We are certain of one thing: in moments of highest sexual excitation the right of personal self-determination is almost completely obliterated. To call this moment of highest gratification an intoxication is more of a comparison than a reality, yet if this moment for technical reasons is unavailable for physiological experiment, common observations of the objective phenomena indicate that there is something of a relation between an intoxication, such as that of alcohol, and this acme of sexual enjoyment.



## RELATIVITY OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

The emotional tempest which leads to orgasm is a phenomenon which sinks its roots deep into the bodily mechanism, a phenomenon in which the entire vegetative nervous system and the endocrine glands participate extensively. It is an interesting psychological and physiological fact that all drugs (such as hashish, mescal, morphine, and the like) which produce pleasurable sensations, effect a change of consciousness which leads directly to unconsciousness when the dose is increased. As soon as the state of intoxication is reached, however, these drugs effect an obliteration of the sense of self-determination and a suppression of the sense of personal responsibility.

Understanding as we do the nature of drug intoxication, we can better appreciate the nature of the sexual desire which leads to an intoxication-like state. We know then that sexual desire amounts to a prelude to intoxication, a mechanism whose function is to lessen the tension of activity; that, in a word, sexual desire represents that surrender to sensual experiences which the individual senses as salvation. Let us recall that all human problems must be solved by individual activity, and that these problems may be solved only when the individual is in full possession of all his senses and abilities; that he requires the utmost clarity of consciousness, a complete readiness to act, and an undiminished sense of responsibility

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to accomplish them. Only then can we fully realize that the purpose of pleasure is relaxation; that joy is comparable, therefore, to sleep.

### *Passion and Pleasure-Hunger*

Of all living things, man has the greatest pleasure-hunger, as the wide-spread misuse of narcotics and stimulants indicates. If our assumption of the biological purpose of pleasure is correct, it would indicate that human beings find life too difficult. It follows that man, who has driven the dialectic conflict between individuation and social growth to an unbelievable extreme, becomes the more conscious of his inadequacy the more he is aware of his sense of responsibility for his own actions and behaviour. This accounts for the fact that escape into the experience of pleasure becomes a vital necessity as a temporary relaxation at that very moment when a man is otherwise especially active and aware of his responsibility.

The ubiquitous temptation to misuse pleasure mechanisms, therefore, is the source of a real basis for conflict. To enjoy, to surrender oneself to a passion (the word is derived from the Latin *passio*, suffering, in contrast with *actio*, action, and *effectio*, doing), if it is to be meaningful according to our conception, premises a need for relaxation, and thus a previous, consciously responsible, activity. When

we temporarily abrogate activity in order to surrender ourselves to pleasure, we perform a responsible act, and therefore, all that follows in consequence must be reckoned with responsibly. Although we are not responsible for our actions while we are intoxicated, we are none the less responsible for becoming intoxicated. This leads to the realization that in the intoxication of sexual pleasure we are not really escaping our responsibility, but solely our consciousness of responsibility. The faint-hearted individual who senses his comparative inadequacy to solve life's problems is prone to confuse responsibility with a consciousness of responsibility. He would prefer to consider himself a 'victim of passion,' and consequently appear justified in using the actually existent nullification of the autonomy of his will by means of intoxication and its precedent steps, as an argument. In this way he fashions a two-way vicious circle from which, in truth, there is no escape. By splitting his personality into a sensible and active 'I' and into another 'I' which is surrendered to the intoxication of sensual enjoyment, he provides himself with a convenient and ever available escape from responsibility. If such escape from responsibility is his goal, the ideology of a variable and not always controllable individual sexuality is of greatest service to him, for armed with this belief he believes himself a helpless victim of his own sexuality; he puts up a

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brave struggle with his sexuality because in being defeated, he demonstrates its insuperable power. But he has not the least intention of attempting to conquer it, in reality.

As a matter of fact the question whether individuals are more or less 'sexed' has nothing to do with the question of the autonomy of the free will within the central personality. We know men and women who are capable of the highest enjoyment of pleasure – and being 'highly sexed' can signify only the constitutional ability to enjoy sexual sensations – who master their 'drives' without any difficulty. The argument of the admittedly weak-willed individual who has surrendered his personal autonomy to his sexuality would be valid only on the one condition that sexuality, as such, possessed an energy completely independent of the central personality. But this premise is in nowise true. The core of passion is suffering, not action; the apparent in-dwelling energy of the passional experience is in reality no more than the energy and activity of the personality. It is this undivided and un-dissociated activity of the total personality which *desires* and *wills* a surrender of the faculty of self-determination in the moment of passionate ecstasy.

The whole sexual situation resembles the operation of those slot-machine puppet-shows in which one sees a landscape with people, animals, and machines

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behind a glass window. One inserts a penny, the apparatus comes to life and the drama runs its appointed course without one's being able to alter a gesture in the performance, be it a farmyard idyll or a gallant cavalry battle: the figures move, the farmer ploughs his field, the cow shakes her head, the soldiers march bravely down the road, while the toy windmill turns its wings. After a few moments the clock-work which actuates this marionette drama stops, and the figures resume their fixed stations. Only a child who wanted to surrender himself to this dramatic fiction could believe that the figures were actually alive. The adult, who stands by enjoying the child's wonder, knows very well that it was his penny that set the whole mechanism in motion. In the problem of passion and sexuality most adults act as if they were little children viewing a mechanical puppet show. They stand in blank amazement before the marvels of a phenomenon which seems completely beyond their voluntary control, attempting to wink at the fact that they set the whole show in motion by inserting their own penny-piece!

### *Passion and Personal Responsibility*

We may conclude: our indubitable passivity in the experience of sexual passion does not annihilate the central responsibility of our total personality, for that very total personality is responsible for the existence

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of our passion. Once we are involved in the storms of passion, it may indeed be vain to attempt to combat it. But it is difficult to believe in the sincerity of our efforts at overcoming our passions, when those struggles derive from the same source that previously furnished munitions to the enemy. While we may not be entirely certain at first that the enemy owns the artillery for which our munitions were designed, once we have experienced defeat, this truth must be apparent.

The fact that the passionate experience may be misused is no argument against its proper utilization. An ascetic pattern of life, in which sexual passion is personified as a corporeal devil, is as false as that pattern of life which is its direct antithesis, the pattern of defenceless surrender to sex. In the ascetic life, as in the life of non-resistance to sexuality, we falsely premise another 'I' against which we must fight, or be conquered. The ascetic wants a make-believe triumph instead of a make-believe surrender. He also puts his penny in the slot-machine, but no sooner have the figures begun to move, than he furiously smashes the glass case and stops the mechanism by main force. His triumph is indeed something of a heroic feat which amazes us – but it is futile and unnecessary.

There are as we know better and more useful methods of proving one's heroism than in staging a

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victory over one's own instincts, although there is surely no cheaper nor more effective technique of becoming a hero without having to subject that heroism to an objective analysis. That man who is fighting a fictional evil in his own soul acquires a degree of saintliness and godlikeness which cannot even be approximated in real life. This tilting against the windmills of one's own fancy usually makes its highest appeal to those individuals who do not trust themselves to strive for the more modest successes of reality. In almost every case a life of asceticism is preceded by a life of unrestrained passion in which the individual felt his actual accomplishments were blighted by the omnipotence of his instinctual 'drives.' When such a man substitutes triumph over his sexuality for surrender in his hopeless fight against passion, he accomplishes not one whit more because, having turned ascetic, he is completely occupied in putting down and holding down the devil of passion. We see, therefore, that the ascetic and the libertine are not so far removed from each other as it might seem at first glance. Their sole difference lies in the technique of their approach – their goals and their accomplishments are identical.

### *Sexuality and the Normal Life*

The correct solution of the sexual problem is no battle. That man or woman who recognizes sexu-

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ality for what it is, a useful mechanism of the psychosomatic unity we call Man, whose purpose is to bring enjoyment and happiness as often and in so far as it is necessary or desirable, will find little occasion to do battle with it. The normal individual allows his sexuality free play, confident that his chief task in life (which he feels confident of fulfilling) will recall him from his enjoyable holiday, when necessary. Once he has experienced the regenerative powers of sexual pleasure he will experience his sexuality not as a weakness, but as a sign of health and vigour. One can affirm his sexuality only when one is completely conscious that his sexuality is subordinate to his central, responsible, conscious 'I.' A man has 'sexuality' and is its master, unless he *wants* it to master him. That man or woman who exaggerates the value of sexuality denies its reality, even in the moment, and precisely in that moment, that he surrenders to it. That man or woman who wishes to suppress his sexuality indicates by his action that he is afraid of it and overvalues it. The correct solution of the sexual problems lies neither in one extreme nor in the other, nor on the path between these extremes. Sexual happiness lies in the naïve enjoyment of the senses which a human being, conscious of his responsibilities, and entirely unhampered by the bad conscience of eternal combat, is capable of experiencing.



## CHAPTER II

### REPRODUCTION

ALTHOUGH we have described the mechanism of pleasure as a device to secure relaxation and relief from the tension of vital activities in contrast to its apparent existence as an end in itself, let us not forget that the pleasure-premium exists primarily to secure the reproduction of the species.

Reproduction is the sole biological purpose which may be called trans-individual, for the reproduction of the species is of little concern to the individual. If we wish to consider sexual activity solely as an expression of the desire to maintain the race, as Schopenhauer did, we can do so only from a metaphysical point of view no one can refute or prove, but we can hardly find psychological arguments for maintaining such a belief. It is difficult to believe that animals are conscious of the consequences of their sexual acts before they have had any sexual experience, while it is said that certain primitive tribes are unaware of the connection between sexual intercourse and childbirth. These savages have sexual intercourse because it is pleasurable and regard the birth of a child as an act of destiny entirely beyond their control. If every sexual union were inevitably followed by the birth of a child, even

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primitive savages could not fail to recognize this relationship; because this is not the case, and because sexual intercourse is a necessary but not the *only* determining factor in childbirth, it required a considerable experience, plus the ability to interpret experimental evidence, before the discovery of this natural relationship was made and verified. The realization of the rôle of intercourse is analogous to the discovery of the cause and effect relationship between a syphilitic infection and the subsequent appearance of general paralysis or locomotor ataxy which is quite obvious to us to-day, but was practically unknown a hundred years ago, and until even recently a source of bitter controversy.

This does not refute the fact that some living organisms have a personal interest in the conception and care of their offspring, an interest less apparent in actual sexual activity than in the care of the young. In animals that live such an isolated life as is the case of most birds, the actual sexual act as well as the care of the young are blind, inherited instincts. It is conceivable that animals living in communities have some conscious notion of the meaning of sex. An individual ant or termite, interested in the maintenance of its own community, would conclude if it were capable of conscious thought, that a constant reproduction of new individuals was desirable and necessary if only because some members of the com-

munity were dying, and the ant community could therefore be maintained only by reproduction and the care of the young.

We do not know whether any such considerations play a rôle among higher animals or whether they, like the ants and the termites, follow an inherited instinct-pattern. So far as human beings are concerned, we are certain, however, that considerations of possible communal value of an individual's sexual ability plays practically no rôle whatsoever, albeit such considerations would logically be as important in a human community as on an ant heap. To be sure there are conscientious statesmen who attempt to introduce such arguments in their legal efforts to regulate the conduct of their fellow citizens. The old motto 'The emperor needs soldiers' was an argument of this kind. Because they are quite right in believing that the average citizen's ethics are insufficient stimuli to cause him to increase his family, these statesmen attempt to gain their end by simultaneously giving prizes for large families and putting a tax on bachelors. They are correct, moreover, because a material interest in making money and saving it is a solid and trustworthy argument, incomparably superior to any patriotic ideology. If in addition to these measures the State attempts to prevent the dissemination of all available forms of birth control appliances and information by legal

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and punitive restrictions, it may count on the indestructible sexual hunger of man that would far rather assume the burden of children than deny itself the pleasures of sex, to effect its ends. As a matter of fact it is this sexual hunger which is responsible for the fact that men bring children into the world without any economic consideration of their future. The highest birth-rates are still to be found in those strata of society which are least capable of caring for their children. The very real economic and social stigmata of illegitimate motherhood are most frequently borne by the very girls who are most imperilled by them, while well-to-do girls for whom an illegitimate child might be a social catastrophe, but certainly not an economic one, fear this danger much more than they desire sexual satisfaction. There is hardly a doubt that the fact that virginity is relatively more common in upper and middle class girls at marriage is to be explained, not by the fact that these girls are more moral than poor girls, but that they are more afraid of having children.

### *The Social Basis of Sex Morals*

One of the causes for the existing class difference in sex relations as regards to the birth of children is the fact that the upper classes, by virtue of their better education, are more informed about birth control and, because of their financial position, are

better able to utilize contraceptive devices. The fear of social degradation which might result from the birth of an illegitimate child plays a rôle in the compulsory virginity of the middle-class girl, although in this instance again it is in essence an economic problem whether the unlooked-for result of illicit sexual intercourse is removed by discreet abortion, or the illegitimate child is boarded away from the family. Finally, we must not overlook the relatively stricter sexual morals of middle-class parents, who not only aggravate the anxiety of their daughters, but actually feel this anxiety more keenly than the girls themselves. Why are moral inhibitions more effective in girls of the middle and upper classes than in girls who have been brought up just as morally and religiously among the poor classes? The explanation lies in the fact that men of the upper and middle classes, on the whole, are more inclined than poor men to limit their sexual pleasures in order to avoid unwanted parenthood. One might almost be inclined to believe that middle-class conditions are especially favourable to the growth of moral ideas especially in matters of sex and that actually the 'better people' are better human beings.

While this is indeed partially true, it is entirely unjustifiable to say that the difference is due to a 'higher moral culture' in the middle and upper classes, or to a 'moral degeneration' among the poor.

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Just as we must find the cause of the incomparably more frequent criminality of the poor not in any hereditary moral degeneration but in the unfavourable effects of a vicious environment, so we must look for the cause of the differences in sexual customs and morals in the influence of environmental conditions.

A poor child grows up under the pressure of material want and countless deprivations. That the child is hungry and cold at times, that it knows no other life, and must share privations with its parents, is not in itself so bad as that it must forgo all enjoyment of the greater and lesser pleasures of toys, sweets, movies, circus, and summer holidays, which the rich child takes as a matter of course. Were the poor child ignorant of these matters he would not be conscious of any deprivation, but the child does learn very early in life that toys and sweets do exist, either by the fact that he is given a glimpse of these pleasures by some social agency, or by comparing himself with a wealthier child in his own class-room. The poor child's self-esteem suffers in his realization of these matters and his suffering is in no way ameliorated by the further realization that the difference between the classes is unchanging, and that there is little hope for a better future in which everyone would be equal.

The child's despairing 'Why?' is never satisfactorily answered. Usually he is told to adjust himself

and satisfy himself with the fact that he got an unfortunate start. Sooner or later the child does make such an adjustment more or less successfully, but the sense of social and economic inferiority inherent in his position remains the weak point within his scheme of apperception. Just as a child who suffers from a hereditary or congenital weakness of his digestive system is inclined to project this point of least resistance into the focus of his life's activities and so build up his unconscious goal and his programme of life upon it, so the child who grows up under constant privation and depreciation will show a tendency to over-value everything that is related to pleasure, luxury and enjoyment, and to find meaning and happiness in his life only in these arenas. This type of child, consciously or unconsciously, develops a materialistic-hedonistic philosophy and style of life, and his hedonism is intensified and reinforced by the traditional ideology of his environment which derived its point of view by the identical process of thinking.

To-day the consummation of a hedonistic programme of life is chiefly an economic problem, and this is the very reason why the poor man makes it his ideal, and we can hardly expect him to relinquish his most precious ideal because he has no money. In the very nature of things the poor man will be inclined to enjoy any pleasures which cost him nothing to the

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*limit of his capacity.* Among these 'free' pleasures is the enjoyment of sexual intercourse (with the exception of congress with prostitutes). The possibility of heavy economic burdens as a result of unwished-for children fades before the actual, immediate, and urgent desire for sexual satisfaction. In the sexual sphere therefore his incompletely satisfied pleasure-hunger is expressed in uninhibited and irresponsible sexual intercourse.

Women of the poor classes, stung by the recurrent experience of painful births and the tortures of bringing up children under the pressure of material need, therefore learn to control their sexual passion much earlier than the men; they complain frequently of the brutal egoism of their husbands who refuse to use contraceptive devices and techniques, despite the recommendations of clinics, lest these affect their pleasure in the sexual act. Alcoholism, whose source is the same frenzied pleasure-hunger and the identical desire for intoxication from which sexual passion derives, plays an important supporting rôle in this unhappy process. A drunken man is more likely to be sufficiently irresponsible and inconsiderate to compel his wife to have sexual intercourse without any contraceptive measures, for the purpose of intensifying his enjoyment of the act.



*Poverty and Pleasure-Hunger*

The greater number of children among the poor, therefore, is an indirect consequence of their poverty, and in so far as one can speak of an 'inadequate sexual morality' at all, such 'unmorality' is no more than an expression of the fact that ethical inhibitions are not strong enough to control the starved pleasure-hunger of a poor devil, whereas the well-satisfied middle-class citizen is in a better position to find substitutes for his inhibited sexual satisfaction in the pleasures of his table or in the enjoyment of nature and art. Moreover, the well-fed citizen can allow himself the luxury of being 'moral,' and his controlled desire for sexual satisfaction in turn enables him to maintain a family of one or two children.

In view of the fact that a hedonistic style of life is not limited solely to poor people, and because there is but one other style of life, the striving for power, which is, so to speak, officially recognized, we may well ask why anyone brings children into the world. Only the poverty-stricken could bring children into the world because of a blind and uninhibited pleasure-hunger, and even the poor would have to realize some day that sexual pleasures are the most expensive. Yet people are getting married every day, in the full realization that they may expect to have children sooner or later. Women, they say, find

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material security in marriage, but this hardly applies to men. A marriage which signifies security to a woman is a luxury for a man. A man must be brave to get married now-a-days, especially as he not only assumes a new economic burden but also gives up his sexual liberty – although it is not now the fashion to remain faithful throughout his marriage, a man is usually willing to forgo extra-marital sexual relations in the beginning of his marriage – and therefore derives a minus rather than a plus of pleasure in payment for his material sacrifice. Why, then, do men get married?

We have already alluded to the fact that pleasure and power are the most popular goals in the consciousness of modern man. Could the possibility of gaining power through marriage become a consideration where the desire for sexual pleasure is more usually a minus than a double plus? This surely is true where a more or less patriarchal tradition exists. Among country people, especially in Europe, a young bachelor is not as highly respected as a father of a family, especially among those property owning farmers in whose families children are quickly graduated from the position of useless parasites to the position of cheap labourers. The childless farmer is actually worse off economically because he has to pay more farm hands, and in addition a farmer, even if he is well off, does not have as many possibilities of

pleasure at his disposal as a city dweller, especially if he lives in an isolated place and has not had as much education as a city man. It is not difficult to understand why the farmer values his sexual pleasures so highly and wants so many children. And we can understand, moreover, why the father has such an unprejudiced attitude toward the unmarried mother. In many European country districts a girl of twenty or twenty-one who has had no child, or at least no lover, is often despised; her chances of marriage are not in the least diminished by the fact that she has 'gone with' someone before being married. The illegitimate child is often brought into the marriage by the mother, even though she does not marry the father. The child's illegitimate birth simply gives the parents an occasion to treat him worse and exploit his labour a little more than if he were a legitimate child.

It would be highly fallacious to believe that an urban population pays a great deal of attention to the fact that under certain social and economic conditions, moral and economic advantages of being a father of a family exist and are a great stimulus for a man to get married. The 'honour and dignity' of being a husband and the head of a family practically do not exist any more. The husband, in our day of imminent crisis in sexual relationships, is in far greater danger of playing a comic rôle; the woman who is

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deceived by her husband is pitied, but the man whose wife is unfaithful to him is ridiculed as a cuckold; the possibility that the children for whom he is making economic sacrifices are not his own flesh and blood constantly exists, and is an unfailing source of mirth to those whom it does not concern. Stubborn enemies of marriage, as a matter of fact, use this argument as telling ammunition, and while celibacy may still reflect on the honour and dignity of a woman, albeit not nearly so much as formerly, bachelorhood never disgraces a man. So far as our urban population is concerned at least, we cannot give the striving for power as an answer to the question, 'Why do men marry?'

### *Why Men Marry*

Should there not be some kind of an instinct in man to maintain his species? Put in this form the question can be answered in the negative. No man really has any great interest in keeping the species from dying out. Malthusian tendencies are widespread in the practice of life, and complaints about the burdens of competition and the glutting of the labour market are always complemented with the statement that too many children are being born into the world. The danger that mankind might die out by virtue of reasoned birth-control is hardly to be considered because it lies so far in the distance.

## WHY MEN MARRY

Although the individual is not concerned with the maintenance of his species, reproduction of his kind may nevertheless have a different personal value. The maintenance of the species means the maintenance of the whole of humanity, while reproduction, on the other hand, means specifically the reproduction of our own flesh and blood. These two things are not identical. The feeling of 'my own flesh and blood' is still deeply rooted in most people, even in this unromantic machine age. Even that fundamentally rational man who smiles at the imputation that the phrase 'my own flesh and blood' means anything to him belies his attitude the moment he hears of the crimes, or accomplishments, of 'his own son.' In some way every father and every mother identify themselves with their own children and are as ashamed of their shortcomings as they are proud of their accomplishments. One might say, to be sure, parents feel themselves responsible for the conduct of their children not because they are their own flesh and blood, but because that conduct is the result of parental education. While this may be true at times it does not change the fundamental facts as soon as we ask, 'Why do we bring children into the world?' and complement it with a similarly unanswered question, 'Why do we rear them and educate them?'

One can prove that the 'flesh and blood' principle is not without significance very easily: many couples

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who are physically incapable of having their own children refuse to adopt children for some inconsequential reason. They rationalize their hesitation with the old argument that even if the child is healthy and comes of healthy parents no one can tell what its heritage from its ancestors might be. As if this were not equally true of one's own children! And as if the majority of marriages really were made solely from an eugenic point of view, and in full recognition of the inheritable diseases of the parents themselves! As a matter of fact everyone views his own possibly inheritable short-comings with much more tolerant eyes than he regards the same defect in someone else, and emphasizes his desire to project his own life into that of his children.

The moving and somewhat ridiculous habit of investigating the bodily and psychic similarity of a newborn infant to its parents, deserves some mention here. The fact that understanding relatives and friends of the parents usually find that the child resembles his father, with a constant frequency out of all proportion to the expectancy indicated by Mendelian laws of inheritance, is not only an expression of the still existent dominance of the male sex in our civilization, but has the secret purpose of excluding any possible doubt as to the child's paternity. Parents are obviously happy to be told that the child resembles its father, and this is one of the sources of a wide-

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spread over-valuation of heredity. The real reasons for being proud of having inherited certain characteristics from our parents and the real reasons why we are anxious to find signs of inheritance in our own children, however, are not these. In the one case there is a tendency to find justification and exoneration for one's own defects and in the other a strong desire to project one's own personality to his children. The fact that we occasionally recognize the appearance of seemingly inherited characteristics with some misgiving in our own child, is no refutation. The parents concentrate their chief interest in making their children as beautiful, as intelligent, as capable, and as free of failures as possible, because they are their children, and actually a part of themselves.

Is this simply vanity? No doubt it is in part. But this very vanity presupposes a certain accepted ideology as a consequence of which children are considered as a part of their parents and as a projection of them. It is this ideology which we must understand. It is not difficult to interpret the wish to project our own personalities to our children as an expression of the attempt to obviate the inexorable fact of the eventual end of our own existence.

### *Sex and the Fear of Death*

The fear of death is a peculiarly and specifically human characteristic. We cannot assume that other

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animals have the same ability of drawing analogies: other animals die; therefore I shall die. Other animals lack the retrospective breath of tradition which tells human beings that *all* organisms die, whereas an animal can only experience the fact that many animals die. Consequently we are able to see that most animals maintain an objectivity about death which seems unnatural to us: the dying wolf is torn and devoured by the members of his pack, while animals belonging to non-carnivorous herds are allowed to remain dead without any consideration. The sentimentality with which human beings approach the problem of death is probably born of the fear and the recognition that each and every one of us will also die. The burial rites of primitive people indicate that they are not at all inclined to be satisfied with the fact of the cessation of their individual existence.

The hope of immortality after death is nevertheless a religious myth and lacks tangible security. The real fact that something of us remains immortal in the persons of our children is a more trustworthy, if somewhat less satisfactory thought; it is a peculiarly human thought born of the highly cultured individualism of the human race for whom the microcosm of the individual 'I' is always more valuable than the macrocosm of the eternal which surrounds the 'I.' Human beings have considerable difficulty in consoling themselves with the realization that their pre-



cious 'I' has the one deplorably characteristic faculty of disintegrating into dust after seventy or eighty years of existence. The possibility of reproduction ameliorates this realization to some degree.

Our interest in our own children may be understood in a higher and more spiritual sense than in the physical maintenance of our own 'flesh and blood' through reproduction, where the task of bringing up children and correctly educating them is understood and realized. While this goal seems to coincide with the former purpose in so far as the wish to attain the best possible results in the education of the children exists, the two tendencies are mutually contradictory from another point of view, as is indicated by the very fact that they occur jointly. We all know how much more difficult it is to educate our own children than to educate the children of strangers. Even the experienced and understanding pedagogue makes the identical mistakes in the treatment of his own children that he recognizes and discourages in other parents. He cannot be objective about his own child, and as soon as his own child makes a mistake he loses the calm and patience which are the fundamental prerequisites of an educator, feels hurt that his child has not done better, and despite every attempt at self-control, allows the child to feel his chagrin. In doing this he prepares for the child's next mistake, a fact of which he is fully aware in the case of other

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parents and retrospectively in his own case. His subjective attitude toward the child derives from the fact that he senses the child as a projection of himself and therefore is personally hurt in the child's shortcomings. He would not make these mistakes if he could view his own child as he views a strange child, and thus defeats himself in the task of education which is his profession.

Whether the education of one's own children can be a life work deserves further discussion. We are constantly faced with the problem of what it is that makes life worth while, a problem which must of necessity concern us all very closely because we consciously realize our own mortality. It is not our purpose to give human beings a new philosophy of life, a new cosmology to which everyone must adhere. The method of psychological procedure is to investigate existing values and to find some common denominator of values from the empirically ascertained material. This brings us to the following conclusions: a great many people find satisfaction in work to which they have personal relations. The artist, the scholar, the physician, the teacher, the manufacturer, may count themselves lucky if they find work which is valuable to them. Therein lies the real value of their work, and the life of the man who is creative in this sense is in a measure a devotion to the values which he finds in his work. Other

egoistic goals such as the satisfaction of the striving for superiority, avarice and vanity, naturally play an important rôle and may even maintain the foreground of consciousness. Nevertheless, it may be easily demonstrated that a permanent satisfaction in work can be gained only in work that one finds valuable and satisfactory, entirely independent of the honour or financial reward that it brings. Whether this is truth or illusion when looked at objectively, does not matter. The more the creative individual succeeds in losing his own personality in his devotion to his work, the more secure he is against the discouraging effects of failure. For failures are only painful in the degree that they touch our own sense of self-esteem. On the other hand, a certain degree of self-confidence is the essential premise for 'finding values in the "not-I," ' by which title we may define a true devotion to one's work. Only that man may forget himself in his work who is not constantly worried about the worthlessness or value of his own person. The faint-hearted man, always comparing himself to others, because of his constant anxiety lest he be proven valueless, cannot escape from himself; to him work appears as little more than a decisive test of his own personal value, and for this very reason his own failures appear immeasurably exaggerated.

(The rendering of the trenchant German phrase, 'das nicht-ich,' is difficult in English, and the literal

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translation is an example of the difficulty of making scientific psychological German clear to the English reader. 'Finding values in the "not-I" ' corresponds to our concept of objectivity. In a sense it represents an altruism toward objects, toward ideas, toward broad movements of human thought and action. The author's personal devotion to the cause of making Alfred Adler's Individual Psychology available to lay readers who cannot have the advantage of personal study with Adler himself, is an excellent example of this focus of life's energies in the 'not-I.'—*Trans.*)

### *The Meaning of Life*

There are some human beings who find values in their life by devoting themselves to the society in which they live. As in the case of work, the ability to love is bound up with the ability of losing oneself for the sake of someone else. Egoistic love, whose chief goal is the possession of the beloved one, leads directly to tragedies and catastrophes because every human being defends himself against being possessed and tries to evade and extricate himself from the pressure of egoistic affection. Who loves truly (that is, unselfishly) must be capable of forgoing personal contact with the object of his love in so far as such absence is of importance to his beloved. Here again we find an 'appreciation of the not-I' as the core of that human attitude we recognize as 'normal' and

right. And again it is a question of one's own self-esteem, whether, and how far, one is capable of loving at all. The egoistic individual who loves another in order to possess him is simultaneously the one who does not believe in himself and misuses his relation to his beloved in order to prop his personal self-esteem. Self-reliance is essential to this 'valuation of the not-I' as it is practised by a lover.

The relation of the educator to his own child is a special case of these two systems of value. It is at one and the same time a love relationship and a creative work relationship. If the result is to be worth while there must be a 'valuation of the not-I' in both directions. Now we can formulate the difference between the father who wishes to see nothing more than the projection of his own personality in his child and the father-teacher who educates his child correctly. The former, like Kronos who ate his own children, engulfs the child in his own personality. In making his child a part of himself he seems to have found a device whereby he defeats death, at least in this part of himself. The latter, on the contrary, succeeds in losing himself in his child. His ego means nothing to him, his child and the task of educating it, means all. For this reason the latter, unlike the former, does not sense the mistakes of his child as personal insult, but sees them for what they are as mistakes from which he must learn. Consequently he will not demand

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gratitude and respect of his child, because these burden the child without being valuable to him. And finally he will foster the self-determination of the child in order to help the child to be independent. For the very reason that the father in this case forgets himself in his relationship to his children – ‘valuation of the not-I’ – and does not think of his personal profit, he will accomplish the very thing that the egoistic father strives for in vain, and will attain the goal which the egoist makes impossible by his own attitude, ‘everything shall not die.’

### *Children and Fathers*

We have apparently deviated from our theme of reproduction and imperceptibly and unintentionally involved ourselves in a discussion of the right and wrong attitude of parents and teachers, but this is only apparent, for it could be shown that in the very goal which the one strives for and never attains and the other does not strive for and does attain, is to be found the answer to the question why people marry and have children. In reality these contrasting and extreme types of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ parents are only theoretical constructions, whereas actually living parents possess some of both qualities and therefore are partially egoistic and partially objective. What they are seeking is what all human beings are seeking: ‘values in the not-I.’ What they find depends on

the degree to which they succeed in losing themselves in the performance of their task.

According to these precepts, one might object, the correctly orientated man would not need children of his own. If a man were to realize the value which he is capable of contributing in his own children, only when he acted toward his own children as he would toward the children of others, it would be of little concern to him whether they were his own children, or the children of other parents. While this objection is theoretically correct, in practice we are dealing with human beings and not with angels. A lively interest in the care of children can be produced in the majority of cases only for one's own children. There can be no doubt of the personal interest of most men and women in parenthood. We have mentioned how an 'evaluation in the not-I' may be attained in creative work, but now-a-days only a relatively small minority of human beings are fortunate enough to be doing creative work. It is one of the consequences of our progressive division of labour – a product in turn of the industrialization of our civilization – that the great majority of human beings must do soulless mechanical work. They all work for their salary and they wouldn't work at their jobs for a minute if they were to be paid their salary without having to do the work. Many of them would not remain idle but would seek some occupation which,

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while it would not bring them any income, would satisfy them in and of itself. These people who are, so to speak, slaves, must constantly ask themselves why they are actually living. They earn money, but to what end? To maintain their lives. But why do they live? To work. This cannot be so, because they work just to live. Nor can the lesser or greater enjoyments of life be recognized as the final goal of life. Pleasures become meaningless and boring as soon as we enjoy them to the exclusion of all else. Pleasures, as we explained in the first chapter, are not ends in themselves, but means for the attainment of relaxation and refreshment, which are desirable because no one ever completely succeeds in solving all his life problems.

There remain the relations of man to man: friendship, love, and human solidarity. Here is an important sphere of activity, but we must admit that in a world full of division, conflict, and misunderstanding, this human solidarity is but a beautiful dream. Any man who is so far advanced within himself that he can contribute enough love to all mankind or to any group of human beings, that he attains complete satisfaction within himself, does just that very thing. The man who cannot find human beings worthy of his life's work and service – and this applies to the majority of us – creates such a group by founding a family. The economic care of his own little circle of



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human beings puts value in his work which, though it may be valueless in itself, pays him a salary. His will to have children is no more than the attempt to create as many values for himself in his life as he can.

It is the paradox of our present civilization that the will to reproduce is often denied in words but almost always affirmed in action. Most young people do not know that the sexual activity which they use solely as a pleasure-mechanism in the beginning, will later enable them to create their own goal in life. They hardly think of marriage, they may fear it if they are men, or they may hope for it if they are girls, but they look on it chiefly with a view to its material comforts or its opportunities of uninhibited enjoyment of sexual pleasures. Only a few men, and only some of the girls, think about the children, but when they have reached the right age and when the material premises of marriage have been found (and sometimes before such economic security has been gained), marriage becomes an obvious course, and marriages seldom remain childless. As soon as a man is faced with the difficult task of caring not only for himself but for his family, his own powers and abilities grow to meet the greater demand made on him, and thus we find not infrequently that the birth of children, even when not desired, does not aggravate the financial situation of the family, but, on the contrary, betters it, because it stimulates the husband to think

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of new possibilities of increasing his income, and because being stimulated, he succeeds in increasing it.

### *Mother-Love*

More should be said about the birth of children from a woman's standpoint. There are certain primary, unacquired differences between men and women in their attitude toward children. Zoological, biological, as well as physiological data show the close relation of child to mother, during the first years of life. Individual Psychology throws no new light on the psychic attitudes of the nursing mother because these are primitive instincts with which we can hardly identify ourselves. We have grown so accustomed to our inability to understand these matters that we no longer ask the useless, because unanswerable, question, why a mother loves a newborn child or actually loves it before it is born. Mother-love is unmistakably a primary and distinctive emotion. It is obviously wrong to identify mother-love with sexual love as the psychoanalysts do, on the basis of certain accidental likenesses. The fact that tenderness is shown in both types of love proves nothing. The tenderness which seeks physical contact and expresses itself in such contact is merely a general characteristic of human love. We must accept this natural fact and have no right to outrage the facts by utilizing the concept of eroti-

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cism to wipe out actually existing differences. The tenderness between man and woman is sexual, that between mother and child is not. Our tear ducts secrete tears when we are sad and also when we have a particle in our eyes. Are we to believe that the secretion of tears in the second case is an expression of an emotional attitude? The psychoanalysts systematically follow this false method of analogy. They believe that because the bladder is emptied through the genital organs, urination must have a 'libido value.' Because we not only eat with our mouths but also kiss and suck the mother's breast with them, psychoanalysts would have us believe that eating and sucking are erotic actions. Freud maintains that the common disgust for the skin that gathers on milk originates from the erotically tinged suckling of milk from the skin-covered mother's breast, and that when this suckling is suppressed, the desire to suckle is transformed into disgust. In such a case exact investigation would have to prove that a child who was brought up on a bottle was never disgusted by the skin on milk!

We have no occasion to follow the psychoanalysts along these paths; we may safely conclude from the biological facts of the unique relationship between mother and child that this relationship has some biological purpose. There is no doubt that the relationship exists in other mammals and in birds. It may

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well be that this relationship is an old heritage of all mammals, hardly appropriate to the present human style of life; that it has become rudimentary and that it can be incorporated only with the greatest difficulty into the personal purpose of modern man. This idea certainly holds for certain other inherited functions, especially the emotion of fear. Fear, like anxiety, in the biology of modern man who needs it no longer as a source of security, is purposeless: that is to say, fear would be purposeless if its purpose had not been reconstellated by man, and subsequently placed in the service of his originally unrelated personal striving for significance and power. An example of this may be found in the fact that a child in its striving for significance utilizes fear to enslave its adult environment.

(In a previous translation (Erwin Wexberg's *Individual Psychology*, George Allen and Unwin, London, 1930) I have used the technical term 'conative reconstellation' to describe the transformation and redirection of an activity, originally designed to serve purely biologic ends, to suit the individual and personal pattern directed toward a fictional goal of power, security, and significance. An example: tears, originally designed, no doubt, in pre-language days of human life, to remove foreign bodies from the eyes, experience a 'conative reconstellation' when the individual uses his ability to lacrimate under stress

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of circumstances, to gain the pity or attention of another. In another sphere: clothes, originally designed solely for bodily protection, experience a 'conative reconstellation' when they are used by a modern woman to gain purely social significance.—*Trans.*)

It is improbable that instinctive mother-love has followed the same course. Mother-love enables the child to experience the unconditional trustworthiness and the boundless sympathy of one human being in its environment, and we know that the child needs this experience to attain his first realization of the social solidarity of the human race so that he may conquer his natural sense of inadequacy. Everyone knows the tragedies experienced by unloved children, who have never learned how to make the human contacts that most of us learned in the relationship to our mothers. Mother-love therefore has an important function in the psychic development of the human being even to-day, and for this reason it will not vanish from the earth.

Two reservations are now in order. The first is that we cannot believe in the absolute irreplaceability of actual mother-love, that is, the mother-love of one's own blood mother. We find no essential difference between the psychic attitude of those who have been brought up by their own mothers and those who have been entrusted to a foster-mother, provid-

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ing, of course, that the foster-mother showed a tender and maternal regard for the child. The results of a good institutional education, even when the child is placed in a home from the first day of its birth, moreover, are not as bad as they would have to be, were there no possible substitute for real mother-love. It is probably true that mother-love is an important, positive, and valuable influence for the infant and small child, which one would not voluntarily forgo except under pressure of circumstances, in much the same way that feeding a child from his mother's breast is preferable to the best artificial feedings, or feedings from a wet nurse, albeit the results of artificial feeding, with our present-day technique, are not at all bad.

The second reservation relates to the fact that mother-love is most easily, dangerously, and egotistically reconstellated by neurotic women and misused by them as such. It is but rarely that anyone but a blood mother can pamper and tenderly tyrannize a child to such an extent that the consequences bring mother and child to the psychiatrist's office or the child guidance clinic. This is due to the fact that there is a prevalent tendency to glorify mother-love in what seems to us an entirely unnecessary and superfluous fashion. The consequence of this is that neurotic mothers can justify themselves by pointing to this widespread and well-recognized 'mother cult,'

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making unwarranted demands, and claiming the possession of 'their' child with a clear conscience. Never are the true goals of education so distorted and perverted as in cases of this kind, especially when the relation between mother and child is secondarily sexualized and takes on the character of sexual love with all its possibilities of conflict, jealousy, and the desire for mutual domination seen in adult relations. It is quite natural that such love eventually develops into a bitter hate, and when Dante set aside a special division of hell for 'bad mothers' he probably was referring to mothers of this kind.

### *Parenthood and Contraception*

Among modern men the rational fulfilment of a social task, under the guidance and direction of a sense of responsibility, is rapidly replacing the instinctive reproduction and care of the young found in animals and in primitive man. While the instinctive factor is not completely excluded, especially among women, it is replaced more and more frequently by the need, born of the social structure of our civilization, of finding a life's task localized in the 'not-I,' worth living and working for. The controlling sense of social responsibility assumes the function of regulating births when children are undesirable from a hygienic, eugenic, or social standpoint. This implies a regulation, not so much of the

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human desire for reproduction which, indeed, is too often rationalized and subordinated to reason, but of the inhibitions of unchecked, inconsiderate, and irresponsible pleasure-hunger. This does not mean that man's desire for sexual pleasure should be denied, but that it should be moderated. When a woman ought not bear children for any of the reasons that we have mentioned, she should not be compelled to bear them. The use of contraceptive devices enables human beings to regulate the birth of their children consciously and when such regulation is not practised it is usually because of pure thoughtlessness, although occasionally one or the other partner avoids the use of contraceptions because he refuses to have his pleasure disturbed. Abortion for social considerations, the final consideration in the regulation of childbirth, is not without untoward hygienic consequences and moreover is still legally prohibited. Contraception, even at the cost of pleasure, therefore remains the correct expression of a sense of responsibility toward future generations.

Where there are no objective obstacles to the founding or the enlargement of a family, cowardice, a superficial hedonism, or a lack of responsibility alone stand in the way. Parents who fear that their child might become ill and die, claiming that because of their great mother-love they could not stand the shock of such an event, and thus prefer to have no



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children at all, avail themselves of the paradoxical security of a neurotic trick in voicing such an argument as an excuse for their faint-heartedness. Of course such dangers exist. Children die at every age, every day, but as in every other vital activity if you demand one hundred per cent. security and will risk nothing, you pay with the very thing you need to save your life. Every false defence mechanism which you erect costs you an equivalent value in life. It is as if a rich man would build a fortress costing his whole fortune to protect his wealth.

The statement that it is a crime to bring children into a world in which everyone who is alive suffers so much, is no more than a caricature of the sense of responsibility. Such pessimism creates the very premises which make pessimism appropriate to the life of the philosopher who propounds it. A man who voluntarily forgoes the opportunity of realizing the only values which are open to him can hardly be a great success. Altruism which goes so far as to consider the unborn child is suspicious. Pleasure-hungry egoists who refuse to have their lives spoiled by the screams of children are far more honourable than these hypocritical altruists, despite the fact that discouragement has clouded their vision. Otherwise even egoists could see that a pleasure programme cannot last much longer than the fiftieth or sixtieth years of life, and is usually closed long before that

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time. The egoists do not realize that when their pleasure programme is concluded, nothing will remain to fill the void of the remaining decades of the lives if they have no children with whom they can identify their lives, whose pleasures and sorrows they may share. Medical science has succeeded in lengthening human life an appreciable number of years. This is indeed a useless achievement if human beings who can now live longer than before are not simultaneously encouraged to find values for their newly acquired span of life in the activities of family life and the education of children. For the faint-hearted who risk nothing, who sacrifice nothing, who avoid every responsibility, life is already too long.

## CHAPTER III

### LOVE

So far we have concerned ourselves solely with the basic biological premises of the sexual life of man, attempting to understand and investigate the influence of these basic biological factors on human life. We have purposely avoided discussing the fact that biological phenomena seldom occur frankly as such in human sexuality, but appear chiefly in that specific and human form which we call sexual love, and it is this sexual love that is the subject of this chapter.

Let us define what we mean by the term love. In the first place it is obvious that love has nothing to do with the institution of monogamy. Where monogamy exists among animals it must be interpreted as a part of the biological purpose inherent in that species – a pattern appropriate to that animal's environmental conditions which are such that the young can be cared for only under monogamous conditions. This holds equally for human beings. It is uncertain whether monogamy is the oldest form of sexual relation in man or whether it is the result of a long evolution. No doubt it has varied in different human stocks, for there is little question that economic factors determine the form and relationship

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which biological impulses take. We know that in many civilizations, past and present, polygamy or polyandry has been the rule. Sometimes one man has had several wives, but in matriarchal states one woman has had several husbands. We know moreover that the form of marriage has varied in the course of history in one and the same human stock, and here again economic and social phenomena have been determining factors.

The present situation in civilized countries is characterized by a formal monogamy modified by the right of each partner to re-marry after the death of the other and by the possibility of divorce under certain conditions. Quite aside from its legal status, we know very well that our monogamy actually exists only theoretically and that although both partners may demand fidelity of the other, strict fidelity is the exception to the rule. If it is usually the husband who benefits by this custom because he takes the vow of fidelity much less seriously than his wife does, the reason is largely that the wife, being socially more exposed, and at the same time in a more circumscribed sphere of activity, has less opportunity to be unfaithful than a man. If a woman is economically dependent on her husband, she risks much more, if her infidelity is discovered, than her husband and this alone compels caution and frequently causes her to forgo any risk of discovery.

## POSTULATE OF LOVE

The very fact that legal monogamy is usually most strictly maintained when there are no possibilities of extra-marital affairs, shows how little it has to do with actual love. Sexual love does not exist when there is no free choice of a mate. While it is true that a monogamous marriage may exist where there has been a free love choice, we know very well it is by no means the rule. Even when a marriage is made in a free choice, the rule is that this love does not last for ever for both partners, and the danger that new relationships will destroy the marriage always exists.

### *Individuality as a Postulate of Love*

The free choice of a mate is a specifically human characteristic because it is the unmistakable expression of sexual individualism. It is possible to conceive of a human community – and such societies have existed – in which the individual plays no rôle whatsoever except that of a subordinate unit in a homogeneous mass. The free choice of a mate means nothing in such a group even if it is monogamous. Differences in the physical maturity or the sexual capabilities of a partner which might determine an individual choice of a mate, would be irrelevant in such a homogeneous society because differentiations in bodily structure and function postulate more marked individual differences in the conditions of life, which in just such a society, would be non-

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existent. All men would look alike, and all women would be alike, while, by the very nature of things, individual defectives would be excluded from reproduction.

Individualization develops solely when a differentiation of life conditions exists, and in the degree in which differences in the characteristics of an available sexual partner are noticeable. Thus does the individual emerge from the social group as a person. The opportunity for objective justification of choice together with a personal readiness to defend this choice, either in conflict with rivals or with social forms, emerges simultaneously. This introduction of individualism into society must always have been revolutionary, for this individualism de-objectifies the hard and fast norms of sexual morality, and gives the individual his opportunity. Only under these circumstances could the personal affairs of the individual exist and only under these circumstances was it possible for a personal sense of self-esteem to dominate a previously omnipotent group-consciousness. This process created the premises of sexual love.

The fundamental biogenetic law that the evolution of the individual is a brief recapitulation of the evolution of the race, can be proved easily in the sphere of human relationships of which sexual love is a special case. There is no shadow of an individual

love choice in the infant when the child can neither distinguish between 'I' and 'you' nor between different individuals in the environment. The mythology of the nursery refuses to admit this and the nursing mother is usually convinced from the child's first day that the child loves her and no one else. As a matter of fact, however, the infant differentiates persons in its environment exclusively by what they offer him; that is, according to an entirely egocentric point of view. An infant will accept a wet nurse whose milk agrees with him in place of his mother, without any difficulty, just as a child in the third year of life can be lured by friendly gestures, candy, and toys and is often willing to exchange his mother for a pretty doll. At this age, however, the child is capable of making social contacts, demands human company, and begins to understand the rules of the social game; while the child cannot differentiate personalities, he can evaluate his parents' emotional attitudes toward him. Such a child 'hangs on his mother' if she spoils him, but is perfectly willing to depend on someone else on the morrow, if she pampers him more than his mother does.

Hard and fast relationships towards the mother or any person who takes the mother's place, gradually arise, chiefly through habit. While it is senseless to call the relationship of an infant to its mother an erotic one, it is true, nevertheless, that this first love

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relationship which the child experiences becomes a definite pattern, whose validity is extended to the erotic relationships of later life. The child acquires his individual fashion of making love in his home environment where the father, older siblings, nurses, and even servants presently become love objects. And just as a child's speech is given an individual character that lasts throughout his life despite subsequent modifications during his babyhood, so his pattern of love-making as well as his capability of love is determined by these first childhood relationships.

It is quite common to find, for instance, an adult's tendency to be jealous in love linked to a childhood situation in which he experienced a betrayal by his mother, or some other close relative, together with the bitterness of another's successful rivalry. The birth of a younger brother or sister is frequently the source of the first experience of jealousy. It may, however, be some other influence, as in the case of a four-year-old girl who one day, unexpectedly, refused to go to kindergarten any more, although she had formerly attended with a great deal of pleasure. She could not give any reason for her dislike of the kindergarten, but the reason was easily discovered: up to the time of her refusal to attend school she had had a playmate of the same age who loved her. The two children seemed inseparable. Her playmate became ill and could not visit the kindergarten for two



## PATTERNS IN ADULT LOVE

weeks. When she returned to kindergarten a new child had appeared on the scene, a beautiful three-year-old girl, and her friend had attached herself to this new star on the horizon and no longer cared for our little patient. Our patient spoke no word about the occurrence as long as she was not asked about it specifically, but she refused to go to kindergarten; when asked her opinion of this new child she declared that she was 'disgusting and stupid,' an obvious contradiction of the facts, for her successful rival was certainly neither stupid nor disgusting. There is no doubt that a grown-up girl in a similar situation would act in much the same way. In this case it was the first experience of jealousy, for our patient, an only child, had always had her parents entirely to herself, and could not bear to have someone preferred to her.

### *Childhood Patterns in Adult Love*

Is this an erotic experience? There is no reason for making any such assumption. Nevertheless, we see the evolution of an embryonic pattern which will determine this girl's love-relationships in later life. We know that she will withdraw in anguish if some man should prefer another girl to her and we know that she will be inclined to slander her rival. Furthermore, we may be sure that she will always be prepared for such a possibility from the very beginning of any love-relationship, and will never unconditionally

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trust any man. The only influence that could change her pattern would be that subsequent happy experiences in her childhood might obliterate this first impression, or at least modify it.

A correct evaluation of the significance of the childhood patterns in the adult choice of a mate is very desirable. It is not so much a question of the fixation of external types which is elaborated in later love-relationships, although we may often link the individual type an adult seeks to some childhood impression; usually these childhood influences are expressed in a negative rather than in a positive fashion. There are many individuals who avoid all erotic relationships alleging that they have never found the precisely defined type which they are seeking. The pattern determines the type of the relationship rather than the characteristics of the love object.

The relationship of dominance or subordination is commonly laid down as the essential condition of a love relationship during childhood. Children who have been brought up to be unconditionally obedient, who find that obedience is a splendid means of winning a father or mother to their side, often pursue the strategy of unconditional surrender to their love-partners as adults. This is no conscious strategy but a purely emotional attitude which takes on a veritably masochistic colour in extreme cases. The 'strict but tender domination' that the masochist desires is

learned in the nursery. Individual Psychology teaches that the sexual partner in such cases is forced into dependency on the dependent individual by the latter's passive subordination: the masochist forces his partner into an unconditional and unique responsibility for what happens, so that although the active partner is seemingly the leader, he is actually the slave. Again this is no more than a recapitulation of a childhood situation. Because such a relationship cannot be forced on every sexual partner, the individual on whom the masochist's choice falls is usually a man of the opposite type, an individual who strives to make an imposing gesture of masculinity in imitation of his father, an individual whose ideal is to be as like his father as possible in all things, including tyranny over his wife.

In other cases where to be spoiled and pampered as much as possible is the leading motive of childhood, we find this keynote transferred into the adult love-relationship and maintained by the proper choice of a partner. Suppose this partner is a woman: in her willingness to allow her husband to make every demand on being pampered, she either identifies herself with her over-solicitous mother, or recapitulates her relationship to a younger brother or sister. The tendency to demand constant reiterations and expressions of love, as well as the trait of being sensitive to contradiction by the sexual partner to the extent

delicate and sophisticated erotic technique whose final purpose is the attainment of the permitted maximum of sexual fore-pleasure while remaining in control of the situation.

Nothing can be done about this and flirtation, because when a problem like our modern love problem which admits of no completely correct solution exists, a variety of trial solutions is always justified. The faults of flirtation have been discussed in another chapter. It is an inexorable law that every defence mechanism costs the equivalent of the dividends to be gained by taking the larger risk. The man who defends himself against the disappointments and dangers of real love by making a practice of flirtations, must forgo the deep joys to be found only in real love-relationships, and thereby relinquishes an essential piece of his life's happiness. No dividends can be had without the risk of an investment.

*'Flirting' as an Escape from Love*

The flight from tragedy, found in flirtations, may often be justified. 'In flirtation you keep your head available for other problems which are more important.' 'When the time to love comes, you can devote yourself to that entirely.' All too frequently the fundamental tendency to flirtation is but a symptomatic expression of a 'fifty-fifty' style of life, in which only side-show activities exist. There are

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some people who flirt with love as others flirt with business or society; naturally no good comes of their efforts. If you are afraid of real problems, and make unimportant sallies along the whole line, you waste your life in the eternal indication that you *could* do something if you wanted to. Frustrated excitement is the central principle of life when you devote yourself to this type of living.

The truth is that the much feared earnestness of love-relationships could paralyse one's ability to work and make social contacts only when the possibility of the occurrence of a love-tragedy is misused as a flight from reality. We must not blame love, but the lover for such tragedies. Earnest love, even when it does not follow an idyllic course, and even when it produces great emotional torture, may still be a stimulus and a fruitful experience to a courageous man. Love ploughs deeply the ground which might otherwise take no seed because of its shallow furrows. Whatever fails to destroy us, strengthens us. Let us admit quietly that a serious love affair occasionally turns out badly and may indeed destroy an otherwise worth-while human being. This holds for life in general because it is life, and not a fairy-tale panorama seen through rose-coloured glasses.

The profound love-relationship deserves our serious interest. No further discussion of the sexual factors will give us any greater understanding of its

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origin and development. Sexuality is the premise of love and love is constructed on it and consummated by means of it, yet the essence of love is not sexuality, the material of which it is made, but the *form* which this material is given. To understand this form we must investigate it, not from a causal point of view, but from the point of view of its final purpose.

How does love begin? Everyone carries in himself the germ of insecurity, and goes about seeking for significance. In this quest for a security of self-esteem we constantly give our fellow-men the task, false as it may be and human as it is, of helping us to achieve significance by giving us their recognition. Many human relationships are based on the formula that we try to make others think of us in such a way that their opinions will bolster our own sense of self-esteem. This is no conscious play-acting; it is our 'first' nature that teaches us how to play our rôle in the theatre of life. Barring conscious attempts at deception, there is no essential difference between what we act and what we actually are. There is little purpose in deprecating a mask when the mask is as real as is the face behind it.

### *How One 'Falls in Love'*

We approach individuals of the opposite sex with the same readiness to make an impression and to win support for our sense of self-esteem. Success is

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possible only when we are not conscious of this desire and when we feel sure of ourselves. Conscious insecurity produces stage-fright: stage-fright previews the failure and one suffers it in advance, to avoid experiencing it in its actual and full seriousness. When you are conscious of your insecurity you are prejudiced and unnatural; you seek conversation and find none because you are too intense in your search. If you are not *consciously* looking for success, you produce favourable premises for success. When you are pleased with your partner you unconsciously put yourself in the most favourable light: you are well-disposed and happy. As soon as this premise is fulfilled, the love-process is initiated and progresses with the inexorable directness of a chemical reaction.

Love begins with the emotional impression that you please your lover. This elevates your self-esteem, and in consequence you begin to think the more of your partner for accepting you. His good grace and opinion is the more valuable the more he himself is a valuable person. By raising your lover's value, you make yourself more secure, and thus you are enabled to demonstrate your significance even more successfully; the process of raising the partner's value continues unconsciously but it is fully expressed. Presently the beloved partner realizes your high regard and responds in the same fashion: he feels more secure, makes himself more attractive to you in

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order to enjoy fully your admiration. This again has its effect on you and as the process goes on indefinitely, you find yourself 'in love.'

It is apparent that each partner's ego, hungry for significance, carries within itself the conditions essential for the progress of love. Your happiness in the experience of another human being's love is based on the tremendous elevation of self-esteem which a man can derive from the love of a woman, and vice versa. That is why love makes the world seem so different! When you are in love everything oppressive and discouraging is swept aside in the ecstasy of the realization 'there is someone who loves me!'

Conversations, exchanges of letters and boundless admiration of your sexual partner play the chief rôle in this first phase of the erotic relationship which we designate as the ego-phase. When you are sure of someone's love you can afford to be modest, to appear apparently small and insignificant. You calculate unconsciously that you will be elevated by the admiration of your partner, and for this reason you admire your lover the more. Stendhal described this as the 'crystallization process.' Just as salt crystals adhere to a string dipped into a salt solution, so we idealize our sexual partner without actually knowing what we are doing. You see only your lover's desirable qualities and thus discover that your beloved is more marvellous than any other human being. In



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the beginning you love only your lover's love, not your lover, because you do not know him.

As far as this point, to carry on our chemical analogy, we are dealing with an irreversible or one-way reaction. You are not bound to a human being, but to his love: the moment that you see that love dwindling for any reason whatsoever, you waken from your dream, the world becomes gray and matter-of-fact, you discover nothing especially worth while in your lover, and the game is over.

A young man makes the acquaintance of a young girl on summer holiday, and they fall in love with each other. Both are afraid to admit their love for each other. They separate without having made an appointment to see each other in town again, but the young man is pursued by thoughts of the girl, suffers because of his love, and sees no way of continuing the relationship. He spends months in tortured longing for her. One day he encounters her in a restaurant and observes her unmistakable tenderness in greeting a young man who is dining with her. He surmises that her companion is a very good friend, or even a lover. Without allowing himself to be seen, our young man disappears from the restaurant with the feeling that he has just stepped into an ice-cold shower, but no sooner has he reached the street than he is overcome with a feeling of indescribable relief, for the pressure under which he has suffered all these

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months, has vanished. He thinks, 'She does not love me! Everything is over.'

In this phase the first confession of love plays a very significant rôle. The open admission of love, which though subjectively true, is usually objectively untrue, makes us conscious of much that has previously occurred unconsciously, in retrospect. It is amazing (and essential to the understanding of this entire phenomenon) how far love may have gone before it is consciously admitted, before a lover senses his responsibility for his acts, thoughts, and feelings toward his loved one. An unmistakable fear of unveiling the secret play that is going on arises in one or both lovers, for in the moment that love is confessed, an obligation is assumed, and frequently neither lover is certain of his ability to fulfil it.

### *The Three Stages of Love*

When the confession of love leads to physical tenderness, the second phase of love which we may call the 'you-phase' begins. Tenderness, in word and deed, is, perhaps, the most significant expression of the personality. The first tender words frequently contain more of the personality than the passionate embrace to which tenderness leads sooner or later. In the passionate embrace, elementary sexual phenomena dominate the picture, so that the personality

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fades into the background, whereas the tender words, which come long before the intoxication of love, betray the true nature of a lover as clearly as the manner in which he treats his partner indicates his personality. As a lover approaches his sexual partner – whether in timid supplication, or by tyrannical possession, whether crestfallen, self-obliterating, or in happy surrender, whether in anxious withdrawal, or as if his beloved were a temptation – so is he! The course of love is usually decided by the first physical contact.

In the beginning of this phase the lover actually becomes acquainted with his partner as she is. True understanding does not come suddenly, because the crystallization process of mutual admiration becomes more stormy, and the desire to be loved by a god or a goddess is reinforced. Only gradually does the lover begin to approach the real essence of his beloved. Both feel a desire to talk about themselves, of their former life, of their former loves, and above all, about their nearest and dearest desires. This is not egocentricity. To speak of yourself is egoism only when your listener is not interested in what you have to say. When lovers speak to one another it is mutual surrender, joyously given and gratefully received. Even in so-called 'platonic' friendships each partner, though completely silent, may still desire the other to tell all that he knows, considering any refusal as

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evidence of unjustifiable reserve, or lack of confidence. It is precisely this confidence which lovers develop in the 'you-phase,' and this new atmosphere of confidence, more than tenderness itself, can lessen the 'distance' between two human beings.

As soon as a lover is bound to another human being and not just to his love, the relation, to continue our chemical analogy, is no longer an irreversible process. A lover is made vulnerable and imperilled when he finds values in the 'you.' When the lover begins to demand love in return for his love, despite his realization that love can be given but never demanded, he does so because he fears his little world might tumble about his ears if his love were not reciprocated. When the reciprocation of love is demanded an insoluble problem arises. The fact that this second phase of being in love is not static, but runs a course of rise and fall, indicates the universality of the problem. Only a very courageous human being is capable of the love which is an investment in the 'you,' and this love is an act of genuine social feeling. Were a lover entirely free of egoism, a permanent and happy state would be attained the moment this investment had been made. Such lovers do not live.

The egoist feels he is betrayed to his partner by the very act of surrender. At this point, fear of the partner enters and compels him to strain for his security and defences. The object of his effort is the

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complete possession of his beloved. We know, theoretically, that no one human being can possess another human being, but in the actuality of the love-relation men and women strive for this very possession, although they call it other names. The weaker member is always the first to desire and strive for the possession of the beloved. Such desire bespeaks a fear of a too immediate proximity. A young author of our acquaintance expressed the situation in the following pretty aphorism:

‘Love is a process of coming closer to oneself. For this reason one must not come too close to oneself, lest it be all over with love.’

One of our patients expressed this relation in a symbolical gesture as if she were holding the body of an imaginary lover close to her with her right hand, while she pushed him away with her left.

The situation of the above aphorism may be graphically represented by the accompanying diagram.

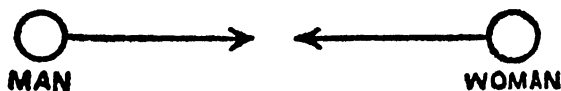


Diagram No. 1

If both the enemy forces approach each other, then love must vanish as soon as they come too close, for

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then the battle begins. Yet the love situation might also be represented by the second diagram. We may

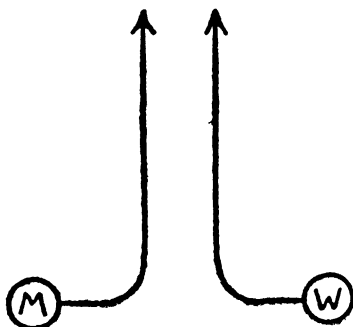


Diagram No. 2

consider the two curves as asymptotes which constantly approach each other but meet only in infinity. In our life with its temporal boundaries, after the first approach the two curves are like parallel lines which proceed in the same direction, not against each other, but side by side. This is the experience of the 'we,' of 'two-ness.'

We shall speak of this phase of the 'we,' or 'two-ness,' in a later chapter. For the present we shall consider the unending problem of love in the 'you-phase' in two of its most important aspects, fidelity and jealousy.

### *The Meaning of Jealousy*

Because fidelity can only be given, and never extorted, all jealousy is false and senseless. Either

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your beloved is true and faithful, in which case any attempt to possess her or to persecute her with distrust, is groundless, or your lover deceives you, in which case you have already lost him and jealousy will not save him. The distrust of the jealous lover is the most fatally effective means of making that which he fears turn out to be true. Torture your lover with jealousy and you antagonize him and kill his love, instead of making it stronger. Simultaneously you compel him to deceive you, you force him to withhold simple facts, or to distort them because he knows that distrust is in the air and because he wishes to spare himself unnecessary scenes. If you catch your lover in a lie, say to yourself: 'He would never have lied if I had not compelled him to lie!' Lovers tell the truth only when they do not fear a catastrophe as a consequence. Your jealousy, therefore, is no more than a constant attempt at spiritual blackmail by which you compel your lover to play the lover's rôle when he is satiated with your love, for fear that you might make good your threat and injure yourself. You calculate on his greater sense of responsibility and are quite ready to worry him all your life long, not because you want to hold his love, for you have already lost that, but because you wish to spare yourself the shameful experience of defeat. What you call love has not been love for a long time, for otherwise you could not treat a friend in this

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fashion. If you really loved him you would give him what he wants – the one thing he can get only from you: his freedom. You believe that you love him and you perish for fear that he might leave you.

These words directed to a jealous woman tell the truth about jealousy, but will be of no avail in most cases. This is a question of being or not being and in such cases the 'will-to-make-believe' is stronger than reasonable insight. Love and possession, to the egoist – and we all are egoists to a degree – are one and the same thing. You love and you desire and expect the same of your lover. No man will believe his beloved really loves him if she grants him complete freedom of action and demands fidelity neither in words nor in action. The least a lover demands, is that the loved one shall appear hurt if he neglects her. If she does not show her pain, or, lest she burden him with a sense of bondage, simulates her unconcern so well that he does not see it, he will be convinced that she does not care much for him and he will reproach her. He will not be entirely wrong, for a really strong love without some desire for possession and some fear of losing the beloved is inconceivable in anyone who is not an angel, and no man is satisfied with the love of an angel. Men want women of flesh and blood!

Demands of fidelity and voluntary fidelity usually coincide only for a short time, for sooner or later one



## UNHAPPY LOVERS

lover makes a mistake, disturbs the equilibrium, and the fateful trap is sprung! The lover who demands fidelity is usually faithful herself, for her own fidelity justifies her insistence on her lover's fidelity. The other partner denies the importance or value of fidelity because by so doing he would recognize his beloved's right to demand fidelity of him. When a woman who demands fidelity relinquishes her own freedom, her lover will refuse to recognize her voluntary self-denial because it would signify an obligation on his part. Does one need freedom if one is in love? Certainly not. But as soon as the faint-hearted lover realizes he could not be free should he want to be unfaithful, he is seized with a kind of agoraphobia: he prefers not to be in love so that he can run away when he wants to.

### *Unhappy Lovers*

And this brings us to the tragedy of the deserted lover. Once love has attained the 'you' stage of evaluation it has its own life and cannot be broken up by a simple act of the will. A certain, actually conflictual character is inherent in the situation of the unhappy lover, but this kernel is hidden in a thick shell of 'arranged' tragedy unrelated to real love. Two young people marry because they are in love. After two months they disagree because both

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are at fault. The girl suggests divorce, the husband begs her to try life again. After a short while their conflicts recur and become more intense so that, one year after marriage, living together becomes impossible for both. One fine day the husband leaves home and tells his wife that he is not coming back, and since that day his wife has played the rôle of a deserted lover. She is tired of life and is willing to make any sacrifice, glad to subordinate herself in any way, if only her husband will return; he remains steadfast and refuses to come back.

What is the status of this unhappy love? Is it true that a wife cannot live without her husband at the end of the year, when she was ready to be divorced after six months? Is it possible that her love for her husband could have increased to such an extent during an interval of constant arguments and disagreements? It is almost inconceivable to think that a man who once ran after her begging for her hesitating 'yes' has now left her. The truth is that it is intolerable for this woman. She cannot reconcile herself to this final and irrevocable defeat. She does not want a divorce because her pride will not conceive of such a finale. She experiences this whole situation, however, *as if* she could not live without her man: therefore, she is willing to run after him, in turn, as long as there is any spark of hope left that the marriage might be maintained. Were she to succeed, were her

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husband to return, she would be quite capable of breaking up the marriage at her own instance after a very short time, and with very little effort.

This mood of unhappy love, this immolation on the altar of self-torture, is expressed in Goethe's 'Wonne der Wehmut.'

'Dry not ye tears of hapless love!  
How empty seems the world, and how  
sad, to half-dried eyes!'

Stubborn maintenance of painful martyrdom and self-satisfied sentimentality are the characteristics of the deserted lover. You can reconcile yourself to lost love if you resolutely dedicate yourself to life, to work, and to new social contacts. Anyone who has broken off a love affair of his own volition, although still in love, usually succeeds in this reconciliation with life. The very activity which helps him finish his love affair, also enables him to survive the period of painful convalescence. The deserted lover seldom succeeds, chiefly because he or she cannot digest the experience of humiliating defeat. Some ex-lovers commit murder and suicide in this mood, not for love, but to revenge themselves. Others, weakly sentimental, retain their depression as their best defence against a new experience which might be like the last. Occasionally a lover's post-love depres-

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sion serves as an alibi to exonerate failures in other activities, and as an excuse for avoiding the test of real accomplishments.

Not undying love, but wounded self-esteem characterizes the psychology of the deserted lover. The most certain proof of this contention is to be found in the fact that the pain of a lover's death, terrible as such a shock may be, generally subsides more easily and more quickly, and less frequently gives cause for suicide, than the pain and chagrin of a lover's infidelity.

Thus we have constant evidence that the problems of sex derive from the egoism of one or the other partner. Egoism is responsible for the fact that approximately correct solutions of the love problem are very rare. To be sure, all love affairs are not as bad as these unfavourable cases. Not infrequently two people who have loved each other eventually separate, in friendship or in conflict, when their relationship comes to a natural end and neither one of them is inclined to make a tragedy out of it. Less frequently, two lovers substitute a lasting friendship for a neurotic relationship. This solution supposes much inner maturity and much genuine social feeling in their mutual relationship and approximates closely to that 'we-phase' described and graphed as an asymptotic curve.

*Egoism and the 'Dangerous Age'*

When the erotic relationship leads to marriage, a favourable solution in the 'we-phase' is simpler and more common. It is easier to consummate the desired solidarity which is the premise of the 'we-phase' when there are children as a result of the marriage. The purely erotic relationship between married people diminishes in intensity with the years and decades. When the fervour of the earlier sexual contacts cools, a crisis, in which one or both partners experience the temptation to be unfaithful, or actually to commit acts of infidelity, is likely to follow. As the husband usually retains the ability to experience sexual conquests longer than his wife and therefore is not compelled to forgo erotic experiences so soon, this marriage crisis affects him primarily. Especially is the ageing husband, who cannot reconcile his personal self-esteem with the fact that erotic conquests are no longer allowed him, involved in these crises. Such a husband may often be found looking for minor sexual experiences at this 'dangerous age' and these experiences seem to have but one purpose – to prove that his virility has not ceased.

Even when a wife does not discover these infidelities, tension is likely to become noticeable within the marriage relation. Sometimes the errant husband has a bad conscience and shows it in his attitude.

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Sometimes he seeks to justify his unfaithfulness by arranging conflicts with his wife. Sometimes he shows a change in his sexual behaviour toward his wife and many a wife recognizing instinctively the implications of an unfaithful husband's impotence, fails to disguise her understanding. All this may accentuate the crisis and whether the strained relations disappear with time or whether the crisis eventually leads to a lasting rupture of the marital bond, depends on the attitude of both. The wife who is sure enough of herself to be clever in this trying situation will be patient, and will wait with undiminished faith and lasting comradeship until the storm is over, in full realization that a union which has lasted so many years cannot suddenly vanish into thin air. If, however, she reacts with envy, jealousy, and distrust, there is imminent danger that her husband, antagonized by her attitude, will allow the rift to widen and effect a complete spiritual break with his wife. We are not concerned with doubts that follow the actual break that succeeds this inner break. Even if the couple live together, thereafter, the relation can no longer be called a marriage.

The 'we' experience can, and often does, solve the crisis of the 'dangerous age.' When both husband and wife invest their vital interest in the living essence of the family to which both they and the children belong, a process of almost imperceptible projection of

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their love, they secure that indestructible solidarity, which makes the lasting union between man and wife not only possible but quite natural. To be sure, this solution of the marriage problem cannot be bought without certain sacrifices. The world of tenderness, of self-completion, the ecstasy and the intoxication of love, and love's surrender which young people still possess, may be the price of serenity. The farewell to youth is easier when you decide voluntarily to relinquish its joys, than when you are forced to forgo them. The fact is that we have only been guests in the world of youth – it is more honourable to arise from youth's board and make our adieux gracefully and voluntarily than it is to wait until our host keeps looking at his watch!

### *Love and Responsibility*

One thing should be clear: what we derive from love is determined neither by Cupid and his bow nor by some dark mystery which drives man and woman into each other's arms and both together into the abyss. Our fate is not in our stars, but in ourselves, in the veritable essence of our humanity. Some of the short stories and novels which life writes have happy endings, and some have not, just as in literature. The difference between life's stories and literature is the very fundamental one that it is the spiritual attitude of the involved parties, the degree of their

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self-reliance or their fear, the quantum of their inner security and their courage which determines how the dice are to be cast. Literature has taken much too much for granted. The idea that love makes a fateful drama out of every love-relationship, in which the actors are helpless marionettes dangling on the wires of a supposedly insuperable passion, is not derived from actual life, yet these ideas may have an effect upon real living if young people swallow them without any critical evaluation. Their underlying falseness makes these literary ideas so dangerously appropriate to men and women who desire exoneration for their irresponsibility in love. We repeat again: human responsibility does not cease where human passion begins, because this is the very point where responsibility must be shown. We are responsible for our passions. As long as everything goes smoothly it is no great art to behave oneself correctly.

Sexuality, egoism and social feeling, are the three elements on which human love is based. The countless shades and differentiations which are found in real life may all be explained as various alloys of these three elements. Perhaps there is no single love-relationship in which one of these elements is entirely lacking. Pure physical sexuality, which certainly exists, does not deserve to be dignified by the name of love. Although the most sublime love between man and woman is never entirely free of egoism,



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some spark of genuine social feeling may be discovered, even in the most brutal and ugly relationships of two human beings, which we could imagine, if we look for it. It is about these relationships that Jesus said of the sinner, 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven for she loved much.'

## CHAPTER IV

### SEX AND CHARACTER

THE relation between sex and character which we are to discuss in this chapter, compels us to have recourse again to biology for the facts in the case. The specific determination of character traits by sex is an accepted fact based upon the biological data of the division of labour between the sexes. In so far as there is any inheritance of mental traits at all, such an heritage ought to be appropriately manifested in the division of labour between the sexes.

The expression, 'division of labour,' is not, however, entirely appropriate for human beings. As a matter of fact we are dealing with the one-sided overloading of women. Woman is solely responsible for the birth of the child and its care in infancy, but beyond this there is no earthly task which women have not performed at some time or other. Warfare, industry and agriculture – the latter were probably created by women – even the hunt have been part of woman's repertory. Warfare and the hunt are perhaps the only activities which, if not the exclusive domain of men, have been predominantly masculine activities. Among primitive peoples, women took the lead in spiritual matters almost exclusively. Women were the high priestesses of the early Teutons and

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Celts, and in many Greek communities. Biology and anthropology compel us to say that the chief mental and psychic difference between the sexes is that woman can do most of the things that man can do, whereas man, in one important respect, the bearing and the nursing of young infants, is completely incapable of doing what woman can do.

Not only our prejudices, but some facts seem to refute this conclusion. It is undeniable that men cannot compete with women so far as the nursing and education of young children is concerned. We have already mentioned the fact that there is no parallel, instinctive, father-love comparable to mother-love. Women have a primitive instinct which guarantees the care and nursing of the young, that is far more powerful than a mere sense of duty. On the other hand, in our present civilization this mother-love should not be over-valued. Apart from the fact that all women do not seem to have it, substitutes for mother-love exist, and mother-love itself is not without its dangers for the psychic development of children. We consider it no blasphemy to say that our present world would not be much the worse off if there were no mother-love at all.

So far as capabilities are concerned women are superior in certain industrial activities which demand a great deal of patience and exactness, such as the arts and crafts. Although male competition seems

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unimportant in these fields, it cannot be proved that men could not be as effective here if they applied themselves. Indeed, men have proved their skill in work usually considered feminine, but open to men too – the kitchen, household work and tailoring. Women are not exclusively predominant and superior in these fields. The real superiority of women is most easily demonstrated in work closely related to the mother-rôle; that is, in the nursing of children and adults. On the contrary, male superiority exists in other fields of learning and doing, although this superiority is partly real, partly only an alleged superiority. It is not our task to investigate all these fields separately, for we are interested only to know that to-day's evaluation of feminine accomplishments as inferior is in no way supported by the biological facts.

The simplest explanation of the fact that the woman of modern European and American culture, in contrast to her status in historical times, is so overshadowed by the male, may be derived, therefore, from her social position. Historical sources indicate that women were superior to men in the days of matriarchal culture, while in every patriarchal civilization women have been subordinate to men. It has been shown that the dominant sex is always the most accomplished and the most capable. We know, moreover, that the change of dominance is always conditioned by a change in economic relationships, so

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that as soon as one sex becomes responsible for the food it becomes the dominant sex. A transition is in process to-day and the emancipation of women, begun about a hundred years ago, has already produced tangible progress in the accomplishments of women.

Single-track champions of male rights are still sceptical of these indubitable facts. They say that women are too subjective and that they lack the ability to think logically and exactly. They say, furthermore, that women substitute industry for productive accomplishments whenever they take a man's place. It is a common belief that whenever a woman goes outside her own domain of the household the best she can accomplish is mere mediocrity, that true genius and spiritual independence in production are a closed book to her, and that exceptions only prove this rule.

### *Are Women Inferior?*

We shall delegate the defence of women to feminists who are in possession of more material, and are, therefore, better suited to the task. We want to know only whether the defects of feminine productivity can be explained from a genetic point of view. It is admitted that no biological basis for this lesser productivity exists. At the same time we cannot deny that the criticism of feminine accomplishments voiced by anti-feminists applies to a certain percentage of

women. A smaller percentage, especially the intellectual women of civilized countries, are in the process of a rapid ascent and in many instances have already attained equivalence of men. This proves that the inferior accomplishments of women are not based on such physiological differences as a deficient organization of the brain, but are due exclusively to her unfavourable social position. The inferior accomplishments of women are the consequences of thousands of years of discouragement.

We now are faced with a practical pedagogic question. Is the relative inferiority of woman's attainment, if not a primary, sex-linked characteristic, at least acquired so that, whilst acquired, it is, nevertheless, inherited? Or, is it that to-day, as at all times, boys and girls start equally from 'scratch' at birth, and the girl's failure to advance is caused by individual discouragement? Both views are tenable. The theory that the inheritance of acquired characteristics is *not* possible is no valid objection to the first proposition, because in this case the inferior performance is not so much due to an inheritance of *new* characteristics, but is equivalent to atrophy through disuse and unfavourable circumstances of utilization, and this type of inherited atrophy is not at all uncommon in nature. The second proposition might be argued on the grounds that even when a girl's discouragement is not forced on her by a false and pre-

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judiced education, and even when her parents have been very careful to avoid giving her a sense of inferiority because of her sex, the very cultural atmosphere in which she lives discourages her because of its countless imponderable pressures. In a world which is almost universally convinced of woman's inferiority, it may be unbelievably difficult for any individual woman not to lose her courage and to prove her equivalence.

We believe that so far as mental productivity is concerned the second proposition only is tenable. So far as we know in the biology of heredity there is no evidence of any such sex-linked, functional atrophy. There are sex-linked inheritances such as the blood disease known as hæmophilia whose symptoms appear only in men. In hæmophilia we know that the inherited characteristic, the specific gene which is at the basis of the sickness, is directly related to the hormones of the sexual glands, but it is inconceivable that an acquired atrophy of mental functions could be linked as a gene with a female sex hormone. We must therefore consider the spiritual under-productivity of woman as a fact in her individual life.

One of the surest differential indices between the sexes is the difference in the evolutionary rhythm. It is well known that girls up to the eighth year of their life develop mentally more quickly than boys, and that boys usually catch up after the eighth year.

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Now this is surely a primary difference, and also a sex-linked inheritance of a psychic function, and would seem therefore to refute our contention. If the superiority of the female child is the product of the sex-linked inheritance, why should not the inferior accomplishments of women in later life be a similar inherited function?

There are two reasons why this is not true. In the first place the difference in the evolutionary rhythm is decidedly not an acquired characteristic, but is a fundamental difference. Secondly, the developmental rhythm is not regulated by the brain, but by the endocrine glands, including the sex glands, and therefore the sex-linked character of the developmental rhythm is obvious. It has been known for a long time that the ductless glands can influence the intellectual functions of the brain; cretinism as a consequence of thyroid gland deficiency is a case in point. A reversed influence of brain function on the ductless glands is not possible, and the hypothesis that an acquired atrophy of the mental functions has a retro-active effect upon the endocrine glands, including the sex glands, and could therefore become an inheritable, sex-linked characteristic, is completely untenable.

The thesis that the more rapid spiritual development of female children indicates a primary superiority of the female sex, which, in the course of



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development, is so inhibited by the regularly instituted discouragements of adolescence that it is transmuted into its opposite, might be defended. This would agree with data, mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, that primitive women of ancient times, and perhaps women of to-day, could accomplish much more than men. Examples of the undoubted superiority of the female over the male are common in zoology. The chief objection to this view is that the great regularity with which a girl's development is inhibited in comparison with that of boys of the same age, makes the assumption of a purely psychological process of discouragement in every individual case very difficult. Yet this assumption cannot be completely refuted.

In the course of these observations we have discovered the important fact that there is a one-way relation between the brain and the ductless glands, and this alone should prevent us from making cerebral functions the isolated object of our investigation. The glands of internal secretion bear a close functional relationship to the vegetative nervous system, and both together form the organic substrate of those psychic functions we call *temperament*. The whole world of emotions and affects belongs to this category. The possibility that the characteristic and unique temperament of an individual can be sex-linked to a certain degree is undeniable, because his

psychic functions cannot be strictly divorced from his emotional life and because these psychic functions may in consequence be influenced by his sex.

This hypothesis deserves further consideration because it is fairly closely related to prevailing views. It is obvious that any variations due to the indirect dependency of intellectual functions on the sexual glands are never variations of quantity but of quality. Our deduction that a primary inferiority of the feminine intellect is biologically as impossible as an acquired, and sex-linked, inheritance of intellectual atrophy, is still valid. Any differences in the respective qualities of the masculine and the feminine psyche which might be dependent on possible variations of temperament, must be examined solely as part of the characterology of the sexes.

### *Character and Temperament*

Character and temperament are not one and the same thing. By temperament we mean the emotional reaction patterns of the psychophysical organism to psychic stimuli. These reaction-patterns, although different in quantity and quality, seem to be directly linked with the physical organism. The organic effectors of the vegetative nervous system are simultaneously the effectors which express psychic attitudes. The vegetative nervous system and the endocrine glands are therefore the organic basis of tem-

perament, and it may be shown that the congenital or acquired abnormalities of this basis are expressed in the spiritual uniqueness of the individual's temperament. Examples are: diseases and congenital defects of the thyroid, of the pituitary, of the adrenal and the sex glands. Congenital temperament or temperament modified by physical factors, follows the laws of biological purposiveness. When temperament is reconstellated into the individual's personal pattern and made appropriate to his personal goal in life – temperament being the raw material which the individual elaborates into a personal pattern – temperament is largely modified and redirected toward its new purpose by the central personality. This is the origin of character. The material of temperament which is taken over by the personality may be either plastic or resistant, and the given organic basis exerts its causal influence accordingly. Character is never built up in so much empty space. The individual's personal goal of life utilizes the raw material of temperament for the construction of an appropriate pattern of life.

Well-known difficulties beset us when we attempt to analyse character. There are no sure criteria of differentiation between the hereditary basis (*anlage*) and the final product of personal self-sculpture. In practice such criteria are unnecessary for the working hypothesis that nothing is hereditary and every-

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thing is acquired has proven itself valuable as a heuristic and pedagogical principle. Theoretically a technique of making such differentiations would be very valuable. It is not the function of individual psychology to develop such a technique, but for the present other methods have given us only the most meagre results.

Instinctive mother-love is one phenomenon always mentioned in the discussion of congenital temperament differences between the sexes, whose hereditary character is indubitable because it exists in other animals. Certain periodic variations in emotional and mood tones directly related to the generative functions of the female – menstruation, pregnancy, lactation, and menopause – are also to be considered as being autochthonously conditioned. The common incidence of insanity in these phases of female sex life, indicates that the normal lability of mood so common at these periods is directly related to changes in the endocrine and vegetative nervous system. These phenomena, like mother-love, may be re-directed and re-valuated to an unpredictable degree by the central personality. A mood swing, conditioned by menstruation, can be suppressed as easily as it can be exaggerated, and neurotic disturbances which follow the menstrual cycle are not the less psychogenetic because they follow an organic rhythm.

Clinical data constantly teach us how the mental

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attitude can influence the physical facts. We have seen a nervous woman who could extend her menstruation and the concomitant 'physiological' depression for fourteen days or longer. This happened only when she refused to work and was involved in bitter opposition to her husband. While she was being treated according to the method of Individual Psychology her menstruation became normal and ran a course completely parallel with her changed attitude in life. The slightest relapse in her mental attitude was immediately reflected in her menstrual rhythm. Indeed, it was possible to predict these changes.

### *Are Women More Emotional Than Men?*

There is very little evidence to prove the common belief that woman, by nature, is more emotional than man. The exaggerated emotionality of women is often used as an argument to prove that intellectual activities such as legal thought, requiring great objectivity, are closed to them. Were this true, a relationship between character, or perhaps more truly, temperament, and intellectuality would obtain. Individual Psychology cannot approve of such false deductions. It is not at all certain that the greater emotional irritability of woman, so far as it actually exists, is a primary, sex-linked, characteristic. Although such a possibility cannot be denied, there is no single piece of positive proof for it. On the other

hand, Individual Psychology finds a good explanation of this exaggerated emotionality in woman's position in the world. Finally, objective thinking belongs not in the category of intellect but of character.

Anyone who has had the occasion to observe a woman in an emotional argument and to listen to her 'really feminine' (that is, objectively illogical) arguments, will realize that the woman was not so stupid as to think logically. She possesses the spiritual strength necessary to correct her own mistaken thoughts, and often uses her logic to good effect in a discussion with some other illogical woman, when she wants to show up her opponent's fallacies. It all depends on what a woman wants to do. If a woman makes logical errors, apparently unaware of her thought processes, she does so because it is the most effective method of maintaining her point, the best way to prove her 'rightness.' If she had the right argument she would certainly use it. A woman's 'female' attitude and her 'female' arguments may, therefore, be interpreted, first as evidence of her desire to be 'in the right,' and secondarily as a defect in her intellectual conscience (which we would consider a defect in her social feeling), and finally, as a relatively insecure sense of self-esteem. If a woman has a good opinion of herself it is beneath her honour to use illogical arguments. Of course it might be possible to find a primary temperament characteristic

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underlying this attitude in some particular woman. This is a matter we can neither prove nor refute, but neither can we conclude from her behaviour that a defect exists in her intellect.

There is a noteworthy contradiction, furthermore, between woman's alleged greater emotionality, a primary sexual characteristic, and her similarly alleged, specifically, 'feminine' indolence. The laziness of some women which enables them to lie in a state of extreme calm and day-dreaming, day in and day out, is in marked contrast, moreover, to the 'typically feminine' patience which enables others of her sex to carry on such very unexciting activities as needlework. For students of Individual Psychology these apparent contradictions are easily explained: when viewed from the standpoint of the primacy of the personal goal, various behaviour patterns disclose themselves as no more than various paths to the same goal. Primary sex-linked characteristics, however, would of necessity be constant and continuous, and, in any case, could not become confluent and co-existent with diametrically opposite behaviour patterns, even if these latter were themselves primary, sex-linked characteristics. We are not justified in assuming that a group of people with brown skins belong to the Malay race unless we are convinced that these same people will not have a white skin in a few weeks. But if they will so change, then we may

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assume that they are not Malays, but Europeans who have been taking sun baths.

Thus we close the discussion of the possibilities of assuming that there are primary sex-linked mental characteristics in women, which contrast with those of men, with a large question mark: nothing more is really known about it.

Even if certain temperament and character qualities, peculiar to women, were not sex-linked primarily, it is still possible that they might have been acquired in the course of countless generations and then inherited as sex-linked characteristics. We deny this possibility so far as intellectual aptitudes are concerned, because there is no evidence for the assumption that a sex-linked inheritance of acquired cerebral defects has ever existed. Our objection naturally does not hold for temperament. Inheritance of temperament along the female line might be possible even when acquired qualities are concerned.

### *Masculinity and Femininity*

There is some evidence that this inheritance of temperament exists. From an historical point of view there is a remarkable coincidence in the description of sexual character-differences between men and women under the most varied cultural circumstances, although they have one common denominator in that they all occur in civilization dominated by the mas-



culine ideal. The descriptions of masculine and feminine traits in Greek and Roman literature might almost have been written to-day, and yet the style of life and the education of children in those epochs differed so fundamentally from our own that human beings must have been quite unlike the men and women of to-day. Still it is possible that thousands of years of masculine dominance might have left the same mark upon the men of that day which we find in ourselves to-day, fixed and reinforced by generations of repetition. Some sexual character-differences, moreover, appear so early in a child's life, that inferiority feelings due to femininity could not play a very important rôle. We see 'feminine' and 'masculine' behaviour, such as the wildness of boys and the greater tenderness and adaptability of girls, in children three years old, brought up without having their style of life coloured by the sex-biased ideals of parents or teachers. If we take into consideration the fact that such psychic sexual differences can be found in horses, cattle, sheep, and other mammals, we would have new arguments for assuming that temperamental qualities in man are sex-linked as they certainly are in animals. If this were not the case (and we have no positive proof thereof), we might assume a second hypothesis: that there are temperamental characteristics which have secondarily *become* specifically feminine and specifically masculine, as a

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result of thousands of years of a fixed style of life, and that these traits have eventually become fixed by a sex-linked inheritance.

Although our experiences in the practice of Individual Psychology have taught us not to over-rate the significance of this fact, we acknowledge it, nevertheless, in order to avoid the reproach that we have disregarded certain facts for the purpose of maintaining our doctrine. Both theoretically and practically, it still seems to us that *in the individual life the formation of character is far more significant than is the material given at birth.*

Character begins to be formed exceptionally early in the life of a child. It begins with the conscious educational attitude of the adult environment. It is furthered by the adults' partly unconscious, partly conscious attitude towards sexual differences, and is affected to a large extent by what we have called the adult 'atmosphere.' The aim of planned teaching has been from time immemorial to bring up 'typical boys' and 'typical girls.' For this reason there are many activities which are 'just the thing' for boys and others which 'nice little girls never enter upon.' Even when this pedagogic principle is applied in a very much modified form it tends to intensify the pattern of sexual types in children of both sexes at an early age. Girls are educated to sacrifice themselves; boys, on the contrary, to assume obligations.

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The little girl, therefore, must forgo wild romping whereas her brother may romp, but in addition must assume the obligation of being stoical, and must learn to bear pain. There are, to be sure, purely intellectual obligations on the part of girls, and sacrifices on the part of boys, but the essential thing that if girls act like boys their over-activity is rigidly suppressed, whereas boys who act 'like girls' are punished by ridicule and despal. Children learn this false code quickly and realize that if a boy does what is permitted only to girls, he is despised and ridiculed, but when a girl acts like a boy she is attempting something beyond her powers. Therefore, boys are worth more than girls.

### *How Sexual Attitudes are Acquired*

The traditional attitudes of parents toward the problems of sexual differences has a similar effect on the personalities of their children. Girls are usually treated more gently, and though less is demanded of them, they are not allowed to achieve any great personal importance; the boys' personalities are more respected, but boys are educated much more strictly. The level of the child's self-esteem, regardless of sex, is set once and for all time, early in life, and it is accepted as such by the children with or without protests.

The cultural atmosphere, moreover, influences the

child's development very early in the child's life, especially when one parent is tacitly considered more valuable, or when brothers and sisters are unequally treated. Children observe these relationships much more closely than their parents believe, and although a child may not discuss his observations, he knows very well how to utilize them. Although this utilization is more emotional than intellectual, it is none the less precise. Consider the case of a brother and a sister who have frequently had occasion to observe how their mother is brutally tyrannized over by their father. The boy's feeling is: 'That is how I must act if I want to be a man,' whereas the girl would say: 'It is dreadful what a woman has to suffer from a man.'

Under certain circumstances the direction of an entire pattern of life may be set in this fashion. There is no doubt that occasionally the child's observation of the sexual relations between parents influences the child's future attitude. Children often believe that the sexual act represents a violent assault on the mother by the father, especially when other every-day observations seem to corroborate such an assumption. In the case of an older child the structure of our social life plays an important rôle in the further elaboration of his picture of the world. He sees men occupied in the more important posts: men are chauffeurs, drive fire engines, are policemen, and

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traffic officers, whereas women are servants or charwomen, while situations such as the concert, the theatre, or evening social gatherings, where women appear in somewhat greater glory, are beyond the child's ken.

The child's picture of the world is built up like a mosaic out of these countless minor impressions. Once the fundamental formula of the depreciation of women and the over-valuation of men is fixed, all further experiences are measured according to this biased scheme of apperception. Thereupon the child finds constant confirmation and corroboration for his original ideas while facts which refute it pass unnoticed. And in this way the child builds up his style of life.

The *noblesse oblige* of masculinity compels a boy to be proud and simultaneously afraid of possible failure. Whether one or the other of these factors becomes dominant, depends on other developmental influences. Where the emphasis on masculine superiority covers a wide range of activity, the boy is never entirely free of anxiety. When we see a boy who is a much-feared bully on the street, torn with anxiety when he is alone in a dark room, it is not hard to decide whether he is cowardly or brave. As a matter of fact he is sometimes the one, sometimes the other, in accordance with the situation in which he finds himself. Because his masculine prestige is too much

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involved, he cannot afford to be a coward in a street fight, whereas when he is alone in a dark room his whole inferiority-feeling forces itself upon his consciousness and he does his best to attain a feeling of security by calling his mother, thereby making himself her master in at least this one situation.

The child's desire to be his mother's master, an obvious expression of the boyhood striving for significance, is given a sexual significance by the psychoanalysts, and called the Oedipus Complex. The Freudian conception is hardly an adequate explanation of this character trait. We found the desire to dominate the mother was much more common and most marked in boys very much pampered by their mothers, and who feared their fathers, not because they were afraid of the father as a rival in love, but because the fathers were strict and often punished them. In nearly every case of the so-called 'Oedipus Complex' the boys had become pessimistic, feeling insecure because of their general situation in the family constellation, and had lost all confidence in their masculinity. The desire to dominate an apparently over-powerful father is therefore easily understood as the boy's compensatory desire to be great. It is possible that on some occasions incestuous thoughts may arise on this basis.

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Naturally we shall find so-called specifically 'male' characteristics arising from such 'unhealthy' situations. We do not mean to imply an infallible human being when we say 'male,' but this suggestion is a well-beloved, widespread, and deeply-rooted prejudice which influences even our daily speech. The word 'womanish' is always used with a distinctly derogatory connotation instead of 'womanly,' just as the word 'childish' is used for the word 'childlike' in a depreciatory fashion. The connotation of the word 'manly' is excellent, whereas the word 'mannish' had to be invented to fit women who wish to act like men.

It is not at all true that the male is the possessor of all virtues. If a man grows up in circumstances which approximate to those which are general for girls, we find all the masculine vices coming to the fore: boasting, playing the 'he-man,' primitive vanity, inconsiderateness to the point of brutality, egoism, bad temper, and a long list beside. These are not tertiary sexual characteristics, but character traits evolved from an over-emphasis on the masculine pattern, and based on a sense of inferiority born of fear. From the standpoint of Individual Psychology little is to be gained by this catalogue of vices. Character is more than the sum of single character-traits. The important thing is the formula of the

total personality within which single traits, in so far as they are valid in themselves, have their place. We seldom have the opportunity to find character traits as constant reaction patterns. Even the boastful male may be modest and the bad-tempered 'he-man' tender, when it is to his advantage to be so. Any catalogue of traits leads to coarse types and overlooks the most important thing, the formula of the style of life.

When a boy measures life according to the man-woman scheme, he often chooses his father as an ideal, so that his further character development is limited by the psychic image of his father. This usually leads to a relatively favourable development especially when the personality ideal 'to be like father' is not completed by the more rigorous formula 'not to be like mother'; that is, when the boy's self-training does not exclude all forms of behaviour which might arouse the impression of femininity. Where the boy's pattern is based on a sense of weakness, there is a tendency to outdo the father in all activities which the boy considers especially manly. When the boy finally looks like a caricature of his father, the resemblance frequently is brought forward as evidence of the inheritance of psychic traits!

When boys of this type mature, their enforced masculinity is mirrored clearly in their sexual habits. The sexual cynicism, the enjoyment of 'smutty'



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stories, the depreciation of women to the rank of mere objects of pleasure, found so commonly in modern life, all derive from this source. They become men who make love an arena of conquest. They try for records in the sexual subjugation of as many women as possible. They refuse to be faithful to any one woman. They imagine their potency quite extraordinary, simultaneously over-valuing sexuality and despising women. As soon as a man of this type suffers a real defeat he betrays the fact that his sexual attitude does not derive from any real sense of power. His apparent courage turns to panic, and he is again the small boy, afraid of a dark room, calling for his mother.

All the *positive* character traits which are considered as specifically masculine, such as self-confidence, a sense of duty, logic, honour, objective thinking, spiritual productivity, justice, and many others, are no more than the indices of a courageous man with a well-developed social feeling. They occur in both men and women who are courageous and socially well-adjusted. It is quite natural that, in an age of masculine domination, these character traits should be considered essentially masculine. We are reminded of the poets of the court of Louis XIV who credited all human virtues to their monarch. There is as little truth in the prevailing masculine ideas as there was in their verses.

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If men are more courageous than women the reason is that women have a much harder time. Nevertheless it is much worse when the burden of the apparently too difficult task of being a complete man puts a boy in the critical situation of growing up under the pressure of the feeling (which girls have as a rule about themselves) that he is a second-rate human being. We have already described the conditions under which a girl's fear of her inferiority leads to serious consequences. Everything which furthers the child's belief in the unequal rating of the sexes, everything which increases a girl's fear of man, causes a more profound discouragement. Under existing social circumstances a certain degree of discouragement must unfortunately be considered normal for girls. This discouragement points the way to the path of weakness apparently prescribed for women. Many women follow this path in the conviction that it is the only path open to them. It is from this situation that the prevailing prejudices about 'these women' and their character traits arise.

### *Why Women Are 'Feminine'*

Many of these 'feminine' traits may be grouped under the concept of psychic infantilism. Psychologists who believe that all psycho-sexual differences arise from an hereditary basis, claim that women have remained, more or less normally, at an infantile level

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of development. We might consider this hypothesis if there were any physical analogy to be found, but none exists. The opposite hypothesis could more easily be argued, inasmuch as the male skeleton more closely approximates to the child's than does the skeleton of a woman, and the type of fat disposition in the female body, moreover, deviates more from the type that we see in children. The infantile larynx, the lesser growth of beard, the inferior muscular development in women, are the sole physical characteristics which are comparable to the infantile type. The assumption of any psychic infantilism in woman as a part of her female sex-character is hardly plausible without evidence of a corresponding physical infantilism.

Let us remember that the concepts, strong - weak; superior - inferior; man - woman; and adult - child, are practically synonymous in the child's scheme of apperception. The young girl, half-discouraged, and half-convinced of the changeless nature of the man-woman situation which she sees about her, decides that she must go the way of weakness. To this end she retains certain childish forms of behaviour and even elaborates them. These traits which she retains will be the very ones which have proved themselves useful in her childhood pattern of life and are designed to transform weaknesses, such as anxiety and dependency, to strengths. Herein

lies the explanation of the aggressive perplexity with which an anxious child or woman clings to an adult or to a man in the moment of danger. An inadequate sense of duty or responsibility is another case in point. To the 'infantile' woman it seems that duty and responsibility are things for grown-ups and for men to do. She believes that the less anyone can rely on her the less they can demand of her. The less she can do, the more they have to care for her. In childhood both sexes do this.

This underlying philosophy accounts for a whole treasure house of feminine coquetry designed to influence a man by means of *naïveté*, childish gestures, and great helplessness. It is easy for a man to play the 'manly rôle' of guardian and leader toward a child-wife. His self-esteem is raised by the contrast. Emotional lack of control and the tendency to complain, characteristic of this type of woman, are cut from the same cloth. The readiness to break into tears at the least provocation, a general lack of objectivity, an interest in childish games, together with the disinclination to enter into any logical thought, mark the woman who capitalizes her alleged weakness.

The infantile attitude of many women is not to be considered a calculated affectation designed to make an impression on men. While this may be so in some cases, the tears and helplessness are usually genuine. It requires no especial training to act like a child: it

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is only necessary to make no further progress after childhood. The æsthetic and erotic value of the psychic infantilism of women should not be mistaken precisely because it has every index of genuineness. The fact that many men prefer this specific type of woman accounts for the fact that it still exists in an age of aggressive and self-confident femininism in which such sexual behaviour is an anachronism. Psychic infantilism in woman will disappear in direct proportion to the growth of the modern woman's self-confidence in her own achievements.

A further group of so-called 'specifically feminine' characteristics may be described by Adler's phrase, 'a masculine protest, with feminine weapons.' These betray a somewhat greater aggressiveness and less resignation, in women who are making an adequate adjustment to reality. Women who display these reconcile themselves to their feminine rôle, but *under protest*, and with the aid of a strategy which enables them at the same time to conquer. Among their strategic weapons we find cunning, treachery, lying, insincerity; all typical weapons of the weak, but nevertheless very good weapons. Intensive training in the use of these weapons is required before a woman can gain an appreciable superiority over her man – a superiority which gives the lie to the fiction of the spiritual inferiority of women. No man is the equal of a treacherous woman who has made up her

mind that she will deceive him, for he falls into her trap even when he has discovered her in flagrant deceit. With exquisite hypocrisy she simulates her innocence, and when she can no longer "save her face," she promises remorsefully never to deceive again.

*The Repertory of the Suppressed Sex*

These tricks fit into the repertory of feminine 'unmorality' of which we hear so much now-a-days. But this 'unmorality' is no different from the 'unmorality' of the poor which we discussed earlier. The conqueror finds it easy to be decent and honourable, but the under-dog fights with his back against the wall, defends himself with teeth, claws and treachery as best he can. The under-dog cannot be generous, and the 'devil-woman' gives no quarter. Her 'fiendishness' is not due to an inherited diabolic unmorality, as men from the days of St. Paul to Otto Weininger have believed: the 'devil-woman' is in reality just a poor devil. The same reasons explain why women have so frequently been accomplished poisoners, and why their poisonings have been so exquisitely effective. Women become poisoners only when they live completely under the economic and moral yoke of men. The fact that these poisonings have frequently been in self-defence does not change the fact that poisoning is typically the vice of a slave, the treacherous revenge of a subjugated human being.

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The meanness and malice of many women allows of the same interpretation. Women use these insidious weapons of attack because there is no known defence against them, because they were created practically for the use of those who feel themselves weak.

Gossip, and the desire to have the last word, are less harmful traits that fall into the category of so-called 'feminine' characteristics. To insist on having the last word at any price, even at that of outraging all logic, until the masculine opponent is tired out and capitulates, is strategy often employed by children and by women from similar motives. Both desire the *semblance* of victory. Gossip is a first-cousin of the desire to have the last word. A five-year-old child said everything that could be said about gossip to a psychologist when she motivated her own talkativeness with the words 'Because if I stop talking, then the others begin to talk, and I can't get a word in edgewise.' Women who gossip want to get the centre of the conversation and to keep it, and when a woman hungers for significance, no trick is either too simple or too difficult, if it attains the desired end.

There is no need to analyse vanity, coquetry, and the desire to please at all costs, any further. These traits are self-explanatory and quite appropriate in a world where feminine beauty is valued as a chattel and bought and sold as such. The woman who does

not use these tricks is at an economic disadvantage. It is natural therefore that a woman striving for significance makes more than the least necessary use of them, but coolly and calculatingly applies these weapons in the struggle for her man. Only in this struggle is woman officially allowed to fight for victory and celebrate her triumphs.

The weapons of an open 'masculine protest' in women whose lives are oriented by the ideal of masculinity remain to be discussed. The 'masculine protest' of women interests us, if for no other reason, because it proves that if a woman has the courage, and is not afraid of a fight, she can attain all the spiritual accomplishments of any man. There cannot be, therefore, any real physiological limit to woman's capability. As a matter of fact the highly-trained working woman is no extraordinary exception to the rule now-a-days. If it is true that the supreme accomplishments of genius have remained closed to women for the most part, this argument may be rebutted by pointing to the fact that sufficient time for such accomplishments has not yet elapsed. The encouragement of women must proceed step by step, from generation to generation, and its progress is never along a straight line. It is common to find the daughters of intellectual women taking up an entirely opposite style of life because of their opposition to their mothers, or because of other factors of the



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family constellation. These daughters grow up to be old-fashioned girls or very mondaine women, in part because they are afraid of competing with their mothers in the same arena. This zig-zag course of development in no wise changes the direction of the line of evolution, for this direction is determined by economic law.

It might appear from this discussion that we too believe that most vices can be found among women. This is not our fault but the fault of a prevailing ideology which we had to *pursue* for better or for worse, in order to prove that character traits *considered* 'typically feminine' are not typically feminine, but the character traits of any subjugated human being. Wherever human beings are subjugated they behave in an allegedly 'feminine' fashion. This holds for men as well as for women. The fact that we actually find these vices more common among women than among men to-day, simply indicates that men are still the dominant sex. But there are unmistakable signs that the one-sided dominance of the male is approaching its end. When this end has been reached, the characterological inferiority of women will have ceased to exist.

### *Biological Factors*

It now remains to discuss the various forms of erotic and sexual behaviour of the sexes. There are

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three great physiological determinants which influence sex behaviour: the existence of a physical index of virginity in woman, the burden of pregnancy and child-birth to woman, and man's limited, in contrast to woman's unlimited, potency.

The moral value of virginity is a product of an age-old belief that when a man marries he desires some objective sign that the child conceived as the result of his first intercourse with his wife is his own flesh and blood. We must admit that virginity is practically the sole criterion of assured paternity, unless the girl has been strictly guarded before marriage and no husband can ever be fully convinced that this guard has not been lax. The hymen, therefore, is like the seal used by stores to ensure the fact that goods which are exposed to sale have not been touched or handled. The depreciatory comparison of a woman with a box of goods touches the very point. A great over-valuation of virginity is found only in communities that treat their women as if they were chattels. This still holds in a large measure for the average American and European community, although the face-value of virginity is rapidly depreciating.

The more men respect women as human beings, the less they value the physical evidence of virginity, but the fear of the loss of virginity is still widespread and plays an important rôle in the relationship of the

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sexes. In the case of a girl, the fear of defloration is symbolic of the fear of sexual cohabitation, and sexual coitus seems identical with sexual subjugation by a man. Here the problems of superiority and inferiority hold the centre of the stage. The significance of defloration is tremendously exaggerated, by girls who understand their real motives for resisting sexual relations only in the vaguest way, because it is an irreversible process often associated with considerable pain.

Virginity is closely related to the greater modesty of girls, and both serve as a defence against men. Here again education and tradition play a tremendous rôle. Modesty and virginity are sometimes so deeply rooted in the emotions that the problem cannot be solved in a purely intellectual fashion. We occasionally find girls who are proud of their emancipation and lack of prejudice, who are theoretically willing and prepared to surrender themselves to the man they love, but who are seized by mysterious inhibitions and become victims of boundless anxiety in the moment that sexual congress is to take place. Despite all reasonable considerations, they cannot surmount their inhibitions. It is not difficult to understand how the ideal of virginity becomes part and parcel of the 'masculine protest' in these cases. When sexual relationships with a man are stigmatized as humiliating, the 'masculine protest' utilizing the emotionally-

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rooted fear of defloration prevents the experience of sexual intercourse far more effectively than do any intellectual defensive considerations.

In the case of men, a girl's virginity may stimulate the exhibition of his physical masculinity. Although a normally potent man finds defloration more a question of tact and technical resourcefulness than of great virility, defloration is still considered, rather childishly, an heroic act. To other men who feel incapable of performing the act of defloration, the difficulties of penetration serve as an excuse to screen their fear of marriage which is really based on their underlying fear of women. Finally, a man may utilize his inflated valuation of virginity as a cheap means of depreciating and humiliating a woman who is no longer a virgin, or as an excuse for jealousy when the hymen is not intact. It is interesting to see how the whole problem of sexual relationships is focussed on this unimportant web of tissue which partially closes the opening to a woman's inner genitals.

The fact that, in pregnancy and child-birth, women must shoulder the most significant consequences of the sexual relation, is the first cause of their objectively motivated inhibitions. A woman has a perfectly legitimate interest in wishing to educate her child under the most favourable social and economic conditions, and as such favourable conditions exist

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now-a-days almost solely when she is married, she is perfectly right in thinking twice before she involves herself in any extra-marital sexual experiences. Although the danger of illicit pregnancy is largely obviated now-a-days by the utilization of contraceptive devices, we can well understand that the fear of accidental pregnancy plays an important rôle in the sexual behaviour of women. Married women who are disinclined to be pregnant because of economic factors are heiresses to this fear as much as are unmarried women.

It is worth noting that this fear of pregnancy is indicated by partial or complete frigidity. Perhaps the partially justified belief that impregnation is more probable when a woman experiences the orgasm simultaneously with her lover is the rational foundation for this frigidity, but sexual satisfaction may be delayed or prevented if a woman feels a certain anxious undercurrent of emotions during the sexual act. Fear of pregnancy is similar to the fear of defloration in that it is an advance guard of the 'masculine protest'; frigidity in many cases is a sign of a disinclination to have sexual intercourse at all.

So far as the man is concerned, the possibility of pregnancy is a test of his sense of responsibility in the sexual relation. The pleasure-hungry egoist will allow himself to be 'torn away by passion' and, in

the moment of sexual embrace, will be completely incapable of considering the consequences of his act. He has no answer to the suggestion that he might think of the consequences before he allowed his passion free rein, because if he *were* to think of them before intercourse, he would, *ipso facto*, be compelled to regard the woman he loved as a fellow human being and not simply as an object of his pleasurable enjoyment. When a man does consider the woman he loves as a fellow human being, the fear of the consequences of the sexual act must be equally as great for him as for her and must, therefore, inhibit him to the same degree. Viewed from another standpoint, it is not hard to understand how an unobjective and exaggerated fear of pregnancy (and the closely related fear of venereal infection) may be utilized by a woman as a neurotic defence mechanism, thus excluding all sexual relations. This is woman's equivalent of psychic impotence, and is comparable to the case of men who cannot perform the act of sexual intercourse, while wearing a preventive sheath, and do not dare to do so without it.

As the final point we must consider the effect of the physiologically unlimited potency of women. A woman's ability to have numerous orgasms during sexual intercourse gives her a certain superiority, but this applies only when a woman considers an excess of potency as a manifestation of superiority; where

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she not only uses the sexual relation in general, but the sexual act in particular, as a weapon of offence against men. Only a woman is physiologically capable of arranging a feeling of sexual insatiability in order to put her husband to shame, and bring him eventually to the point of complete impotence. But only that man who is uncertain of his own masculinity because of his vacillating self-esteem can make a veritable bogey out of this unlimited potency and possible insatiability of a woman. These faint-hearted men exaggerate woman's sexual superiority beyond all reasonable limits. They are responsible for the beliefs that women are demons and vampires who suck the power from men's limbs. The discussion of this problem leads us directly to our next chapter which deals with the neurotic conflicts and aberrations in sex.

## CHAPTER V

### CONFLICT AND PERVERSION

WE have been constantly confronted in our earlier chapters with the innumerable conflicts that arise in the solution of the sexual problem. We have made no attempt to divert the reader's eyes from the realization that the sexual neuroses which may occur to anyone are not only difficult of solution, but sometimes impossible of a correct solution. We have thus fore-armed ourselves against the uncritical optimism of those who believe we are living in the best of all possible worlds, that God has beautifully arranged everything for us, and that we need but follow His commandments to participate in a complete happiness on earth. The problem is certainly not so simple, and surely no one will suspect us of being defeatists if we apply ourselves to the task of describing as clearly as possible the *real* problems of love.

Man's love-life is a partial manifestation of the general problem of human existence, and like that general problem is based on the fact of individuation. Human beings, we may assume by analogy, have been driven out of the paradise of a pure communal life. The legend of the original sin with its age-old wisdom is the symbol of the expulsion. When man



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lost his early communal life he learned the difference between good and evil, and thus he acquired a personal idea, a conscience, a sense of inferiority, and a desire for personal significance. These qualities, while inappropriate to a completely social being, exist nevertheless because human beings, as individuals, at the same time feel themselves members of a group.

The paradise of pure social life of which we speak must not be thought an actual historical fact: it is solely a logical hypothesis. We utilize this fictional construction as a criterion of value – man is a valuing animal – and as an indication of the desired goal of man's development. The goal of evolution is the point where the two fundamental and apparently divergent principles of human life converge. In other words, the goal of human development is the point where a human being could be both a personality and a social being. This is an endless task which we approach as a limit without ever completely solving. We, as Individual Psychologists, hold it our task to show, not how the problem can be perfectly solved, but how ordinary human beings may substitute minor mistakes for the great errors which men commit in ignorance of the problem.

Let us begin with a case history that epitomizes the problems of the love life. A young boy, fifteen

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years old, masturbates.<sup>1</sup> In and of itself this is no great matter, as animals also masturbate when they have no opportunity for sexual intercourse. It is natural that a pleasure mechanism, once discovered, should be further utilized. Were this young boy a member of some primitive tribe he probably would find no need for ipsation, because at fifteen he would have found a sexual partner already and would be practising normal sexual intercourse with her. Our civilized boy, however, begins to reproach himself, either because he has been intimidated by someone or because he has discovered that masturbation is evil by himself. Self-reproaches are always an index of an individual's realization of his anti-social behaviour. We do not agree in the least with the boy's menacing father who believes his ipsating son is an unmoral being, but we do know from experience that ipsation leads to isolation, to psychic autarchy, and finally to an abrogation of the ipsator's social relations. Ipsation sets a premium on isolation and for this reason is to be considered anti-social.

This young boy is not entirely without grounds for reproaching himself, but what shall he do? What shall we advise him to do if he comes to us for advice?

<sup>1</sup> The words *ipsation*, *ipsate* are to be preferred to *masturbation*, *masturbate*, as more exactly expressing the *meanings* it is desired to convey, *i.e.* the production of self-relief from sexual tension.—F. G. C.

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If we advise him to master his habit and cease to ipsate, we reinforce a pattern which he has already chosen, and urge him to use a technique he has always found unsuccessful. As he says, he *cannot* stop ipsating. Our advice would simply drive him anew into his dilemma. If we tell him to continue, we advise him to do something which we consider false, and we are not helping him, moreover, because although he can easily continue, he cannot do so with a clear conscience.

Although the boy experiences the conflict falsely as a *moral* conflict, he is nevertheless right in his feeling that ipsation is undesirable. But did we not say that animals ipsate, and that it was really nothing evil? Animals present no analogous problems. They live either in communities or isolated. When they live in a herd, ipsation is not a retreat from the animal community because animals do not retreat in this fashion, and in the second case they are isolated from the beginning. When a human being ipsates he withdraws from society, and he senses that this conduct is mistaken. So long as a man senses no harm in ipsation, and this happens occasionally, it is *not* harmful because it has not yet had an anti-social effect. As soon as ipsation does have an anti-social effect there is a conflict, and as soon as an individual experiences a conflict, the conflict militates against his social group because it engulfs and con-

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centrates on itself all the interests which would otherwise be directed toward the environment. The stimulus to ipsation then increases, and we have a vicious circle: ipsation → isolation → conflict → reinforced isolation → redoubled ipsation.

We really do not know how to advise this boy for we cannot even urge him to seek normal sexual intercourse. He would probably go to a prostitute if we did so, but this is really no better than ipsation socially, and if he were so far advanced that he could seek and find true sexual contact he would not need our advice. It is his very isolation which prevents him from making true contact with the other sex.

In reality we give him no false advice at all because we know all advice would be false. What we do is to show him how he has got into a vicious circle knowing very well that some preceding discouragement must have driven him to isolation. Whether the boy ipsated in the past without remorse, or has only lately begun to, his conflict has its origin in some previous discouragement, and this discouragement has nothing whatsoever to do with sex. What we do is to discuss the origin of his difficulties with the young man and attempt to show him that he is unnecessarily discouraged. If we succeed he will conclude that he must direct his activities properly to the outer world, will begin to seek contact with things, people, and work, and eventually the vicious

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circle will unwind itself in the opposite direction and become a benign circle: social contact→disappearance of the ipsation conflict→better contacts→disappearance of ipsation.

### *Principles of Treatment*

On closer investigation we notice that although we have cured this young man, we have not solved his conflict. It might be said that we have displaced the conflict according to the principle of 'let's talk of something else,' and this quite wisely, because the conflict *originated in exactly this fashion, as a flight from a defeat in some other arena of life.* The conflict itself can never be solved. To-day the young man who has long ago ceased to ipsate of his own free will, still does not know whether he should have fought his tendency or have submitted to it when he first came to consult us.

The therapy of Individual Psychology in cases of erotic conflict teaches us one important truth: isolated conflicts within the personality do not exist. All conflicts and aberrations of conduct are interconnected and relative, and therefore we can follow the thread that leads us out of the maze to its very end, where active encouragement begins and leads eventually to the cure of the total personality. The psychotherapy is seldom as simple as the case we have just described, for there is always the possibility

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that our clues will lead us to a second problem just as difficult to solve, and the second problem may lead to the third, and so on. Life is full of such partly insoluble problems, but what we can do is to illuminate errors in the sense of self-esteem and so pave the way to encouragement.

Despite all our problems, we maintain that each and every one of us has a livable life. If you believe that there is no solution for your life you are probably running amok in a conflict which is in itself insoluble. We know that life is livable, and, therefore, if you are involved in an apparently hopeless conflict there must be a mistake somewhere. How do we know that every life may be lived effectively? We are open to conviction that an individual's life may literally be unlivable, but up to the present time no one has succeeded in demonstrating such a case.

The problem of ipsation which served as an example of the whole problem of sexual life, may simultaneously serve us in a discussion of puberty, that important phase of the sexual life of every human being which is almost always charged with conflicts. To begin with, sexual maturity is attained neither physiologically nor psychologically with the single sudden appearance it frequently seems to show. To begin with, sexual maturity which often seems to appear suddenly in full vigour, is in reality not a spontaneous phenomenon. On the contrary, it is a

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long, slow process of physiological and psychological maturation which always begins long before the adolescent or his parents are aware of its existence. What makes it appear as a sudden phenomenon is no more than the circumstance that certain partial manifestations of puberty, such as the change of voice in boys, and menstruation in girls, by the very nature of things, must appear abruptly. These manifestations are regarded by parents as well as the adolescent himself as the decisive onset of sexual maturity, and are responded to as such, and it is this very suddenness which may occasion the shock that is experienced at this time.

To understand this shock we must first understand what sexual maturity signifies to an adolescent. It means the final breaking with childhood and the beginning of a real and earnest life. While childhood signifies being small, helpless, and unconscious, it signifies at the same time a certain security and personal irresponsibility. With the onset of sexual maturity the child must forgo these attributes if he wants to be 'grown up.' He is really not asked whether he wants to be grown up or not, he simply *is* grown up. This compulsory relinquishment of the security of childhood is borne easily when the child feels that he is strong and big enough to assume the rôle of an adult; that is if he has enough self-confidence. If he lacks this self-confidence the child

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faces a crisis whose purpose is no other than that of indefinite procrastination and projecting the final decision to be grown up into the future. So long as a child feels himself lonely, misunderstood, out of sympathy with God and the world, and tormented with the problems of his inner life, sex, and the world about him, just so long does life fail to touch him. The child remains in a state of armed truce. All adolescents are hungry for problems and conflicts at a certain age; they seek conflicts because they are afraid to live.

### *Adolescent Problems*

Aside from the conflict of ipsation the proper relation to the opposite sex is an important adolescent problem. The adolescent's physical maturity, once it has begun, sets the pace and *tempo* of this problem. He becomes very self-conscious. What shall he say to a girl? What should a girl say to a boy? The more critical the occasion, the more apparent the adolescent's stage fright. He dreams of erotic conquests, of fantastic brilliance, but his chief desire is to run away when the danger of meeting a member of the other sex appears. These perplexities, aggravated by the greater emotional lability due to the abrupt evolution of the endocrine glands, are part of the crisis of his self-esteem. The adolescent seeks to evade his problem. Girls fall in love with their



teachers, with actors, movie stars, and other unattainable men. Boys make overtures to mature women. In both cases the choice of love objects is simplified by the childhood pattern in which one has learned to love, still unerotically, some representative of the opposite sex, some older man or some more mature woman. This is the time of temporary homosexual attachments and 'crushes' which are to be interpreted as attempts to evade reality.

Many people do not emerge from this phase of developmental stress and strain for years, although the physiological manifestations of puberty have long since passed. A 'hang-over' of psychic adolescence which sometimes extends into the late thirties and occasionally lasts throughout life is not unknown. These latter cases are on the fringe of dementia præcox. We call such people *schizoid* individuals and such delayed adolescence probably does not occur without some hereditary predisposition. Even though these cases are not always curable, they can be explained and understood by Individual Psychology.

Another typical manifestation of adolescence projected into the sexual life is the not uncommon love-attachment to a much older partner, called gerontophilia. Gerontophilia includes erotic relationships between a mature woman and a young man, and those between an old man and a young girl. It is not hard to understand how the younger partner enters

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into such a relationship. The combination of a feeling of inadequacy in love together with the older partner's willingness to assume the responsibility, facilitates the first step along a path which the young man or woman is not sufficiently courageous to try 'on his own' with a contemporary. The danger for the younger member is really not too great: such relationships usually end with the younger partner, richer in self-confidence and courage, seeking a relationship with a partner of his own age.

But for the older partner, especially a woman near the menopause, a tragic situation may easily ensue. Her willingness to enter into a relationship with a much younger man is a decisive mistake because it is an attempt to run away from old age. It is an illusion to believe that old age can be escaped, but for a time she finds that the illusion becomes a fairy-tale reality. She loves and is loved, and all is as it used to be. Jealousy, mistrust, and endless anxiety that the lover may be lost follow in turn. Once such a woman has become uncertain of her lover she adds mistake to mistake, cannot leave him in peace, makes scenes, attempts to control his habits and behaviour, thus hastening the end which might otherwise have been delayed until much later.

A woman who is a deserted lover after the age of forty is really a tragic figure. The realization that she must finally forgo all sexual experience seems

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unbearable, and she believes that perhaps she would not have been deserted if this last love experience had not occurred. Thus we find humiliation and hopelessness united in her heart. Neuroses and suicides frequently occur in this situation.

### *When Sexual Desire Wanes*

What is the mistake in these cases? These women are not properly prepared to relinquish sexual experiences. A woman who has work to do, or a family to whom she can devote herself, or an activity in which she can experience her sense of value, is not forced to find sex the *only* vital activity open to her. The busy woman finds it simpler to give up sex voluntarily and in good time, although it is never very easy. A one-sided specialization in love without which the catastrophe we have just described is impossible, is in itself the expression of discouragement. As long as this woman was beautiful, she had her chief triumphs in sex and dared not trust herself to others. As beauty wanes, she is unprepared and helpless, and does not know what to do with the rest of her life. If she now suffers a depression which may be intensified by the emotional lability of the approaching menopause, the meaning of this depression is obvious: "If I cannot be loved any more, I can at least be sympathized with as a very sick woman."

The situation of an ageing man who experiences

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similar conditions, is not so bad, for he usually has other activities to occupy his time. Nevertheless one occasionally sees marriages of a man with a girl thirty years his junior which are based upon the same false goals as are the analogous cases in women. They usually come to the same bad end.

Under existing social and cultural conditions the solution of the sexual problem is more important for a woman than for a man, and yet all activity in this sphere, where it is so vitally important that a woman should decide how her life should be lived, is prohibited by a convention which men have superimposed upon her. During the centuries in which an indestructible dominance of the male made any revolt impossible, this unbearable situation was suffered by woman in silence. To-day the whole structure of masculine dominance threatens to tumble down as soon as a single stone in its foundation is loosened. Herein lies the sexual crisis of to-day. Women are just beginning to sense how intolerable their situation is, because the primacy of the male is on the wane. The modern woman, trailing her broken chains, of necessity finds her first steps along the new path very difficult. It used to be much easier for women not to have to strive at all! To-day this is impossible. Time has proved that man and woman are inextricably linked one with another, for better or for worse, and the more difficult the solution of the sexual

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problem for women, the more difficult it must be for men.

### *The Meaning of Impotence and Frigidity*

It is in just such an age that functional sexual aberrations become everyday phenomena. The psychic impotence of men and the frigidity of women signify a clear 'No!' to the demands of sexual life. The most common disturbance of potency is that of the timid man who uses his timidity to make any real social contact with a woman impossible, thus projecting any sexual contacts indefinitely into the future. It is not this procrastination which drives a man to his physician. The individual is anxious solely about his disturbed sexual functions, which he views as isolated phenomena entirely divorced from his total personality. Impotent men usually blame previous ipsation more or less openly for their present impotence. Their sexual failures are usually limited to impotence in frequentation with prostitutes, almost the only type of sexual activity open to a member of an inhibited society. In reality it is fallacious to call a man impotent when he fails with a prostitute, for such contact is completely impossible for a man who cannot make human contacts. If such a man finds no human relations to the prostitute with whom he cohabits (as is usually the case) sexual intercourse becomes equivalent to ipsation under new and less

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favourable conditions. The presence of the prostitute disturbs the sexual neurotic's isolation, checking the fantasies, which are not only the first premise but the essential condition of his sexual satisfaction by ipsation; as a result he has actually achieved no sexual adjustment at all, neither the normal sex act, nor autoerotic satisfaction. Under these circumstances the man's organism is quite right in failing; that is, he is quite *justified* in being impotent. It might be said that the man does not fail in his sexual act at all, because he has not experienced any real stimulus to sexual excitation.

The trouble is that the timid man misunderstands the situation. He regards his sexual organs as if they were a machine which ought to function in every case where the external situation is appropriate to its use, unless the machine is spoiled. His seeming impotence causes a reaction of depression and perplexity. Such impotent men are always men who have doubted their own masculinity since childhood, and as a result their unimportant experiences of impotence become the terrible corroboration of the fear and doubt which have always tortured them.

A true psychic impotence then develops on the heels of this profound disruption of their sense of self-esteem. The next attempt is undertaken in the shadow of the depressing emotions following their first failure and the anxious pessimism of the belief

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'I will fail again' reinforces the cramp-like inhibitions of this essentially false situation. Now the sexual function is one of those that is regulated by a sub-cortical automatism and is inhibited by all active conscious attention. A vicious circle expressing itself in an inability to experience a normal erection arises therefrom: the more erection is thought of, the less erection is possible, while the less the success in having an erection, the more there is to be thought about. If all attention to erection could be actively excluded the inhibition would vanish, but this is the very thing which is impossible.

Here again the principle of treatment is 'talk of something else.' The sources of timidity must be discovered, and the path to humanity and especially the path to co-operation with women must be laid in a non-sexual sphere. A really normal sexual adjustment, that is, a relation with a woman who is loved as an equal, occurs in and of itself as soon as the patient's self-confidence and self-esteem have been raised.

Premature ejaculation (*ejaculatio præcox*) is another disturbance of potency which is perhaps more common than is true impotence. Whereas in true impotence no erection and no sexual excitement occurs, in premature ejaculation the excitement is too quick. In this case it is *apparently* an over-plus of masculinity which hinders the correct functioning of the sexual apparatus. The usual impatience which drives

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a man to sexual intercourse under normal conditions is experienced as boundlessly exaggerated so that the sexual orgasm of the male occurs before contact has been made with the woman, or immediately thereafter.

The meaning of this premature ejaculation can be understood by its result: to all intents and purposes sexual intercourse does not occur. Intercourse does not seem to be hindered by the man's fear of his partner – but it is inhibited in such a way that the man's masculinity is apparently maintained intact. Men who suffer from this form of sexual neurasthenia are almost always vain and ambitious and inclined to evade decisions in other matters which they sense as personality tests, though always in a manner that leaves their prestige secure. It is obvious that the same pattern must show itself in their sexual activities, and it is for this reason that the treatment of premature ejaculation cannot be an isolated treatment of the sexual aberration.

In women, frigidity is the equivalent of disturbances of potency in men. Frigidity is much commoner than impotence, and much more seldom treated by a physician, because frigidity does not in itself entail much disturbance of function. There are a great many women who are completely reconciled to their frigidity, at least when their husbands do not complain of it. Many frigid women do not discover



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that there is any inadequacy of their sexual functioning until the reading of a book or a casual conversation brings it to their attention, after years of marriage. The disorientation (and one might almost say, the purposive and emotionally tinged lack of interest in sexual matters which many women exhibit) is so marked that many go through life without really understanding anything about sex.

It is often claimed that frigidity in women has an organic basis which is supposed to consist in the fact that sexual feeling is limited, in about a third of all women, to the sexual excitation of the clitoris (the rudimentary male penis in women), and that the clitoris is not stimulated sufficiently during normal sexual contact to cause an orgasm. It is true that the transition of excitability from the clitoris to the vaginal mucous membrane proceeds quite slowly during the first attempts at sexual intercourse, especially in women who have ipsated a great deal before marriage, and have, therefore, trained their clitoris sexually, so to speak. But even in these cases, and indeed, in these very cases, purely psychic factors play the decisive rôle.

The case of a young girl who began to ipsate by accident at the age of fifteen is a characteristic example. She noticed with terror one day that something had changed in her genital organs. She was unable to tell us exactly what it was, for she had been

married a long time when she discussed the matter during the treatment. Since she denied any manipulation we may assume that she experienced a strong erection of the clitoris. In any case she was convinced from that day onward that she had done something terrible to herself but did not dare to talk to anyone about it. She ceased to masturbate very soon after this experience. The further development of her erotic life proceeded under the pressure of the belief that she would never be able to marry because something was wrong with her genital organs and that she was, as she said, 'not really a woman.' She allowed herself to be admired by young men but let no one approach her, and finally married the most stubborn of her suitors, not because she loved him, but as a matter of convenience. She then consulted a gynaecologist because she was horribly afraid that her defect would be discovered, but he assured her that her genital organs were perfectly normal. Thus she lost her last excuse for not marrying. Her behaviour was such that she was untouched during the first days of her marriage and it was weeks before her husband was able to effect a penetration. When we saw her she had been married four years, was very unhappy in her marriage, and quite naturally, frigid.

Although we might easily have deduced her disinclination to be a woman and to assume the responsibilities of womanhood from her sexual behaviour,

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it is even easier to read that disinclination between the lines of her other behaviour. Pride is her outstanding characteristic. She was the darling of her father and grew up among a number of brothers with whom she competed in every sport and activity. She could not reconcile herself to life as a girl 'from a nice family.' If she had been courageous enough to break with traditions she might perhaps have been able to have a sex relationship with a man without marrying him. She did not trust herself to do this because, as she said, 'I really am just a woman,' although by virtue of her alleged defect she claimed that she was not one.

In this case the clitoris is the unmistakable symbol of a 'masculine protest' in a woman who is capable of evading a correct sexual relationship by means of the fiction of an organic defect. It is not hard to understand why this woman was both frigid and nervous, for both these manifestations are signs of the 'masculine protest.' Her cure consisted in dispelling the smoke-screen which she had spread about her entire life, and when she understood her situation she was capable of putting both her sexual and her personal relations in order.

### *'Sacred' and 'Profane' Love*

At this point we may well call attention to a psychological situation which plays an important rôle in

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the lives of both men and women. This phenomenon is the contrast between spiritual and physical love, between sublime love and bodily lust. It is well known that this contrast assumes an important place in the ideas of most women. The first reaction of the girl we have just described to the sexual approach of her husband was disgust. As a matter of fact, disgust at the masculine approach is the most beloved emotional reaction of women who are unprepared to solve their love problem. These are the women who are in love with the kind of love that we read about in novels, and see in the movies and in the theatre where the curtain falls before the sexual act begins. They dream about such romantic love and experience it to a degree in their flirtations. Romantic love is the best example we can give of man's faculty of saying 'yes' and acting 'no.' The affirmation of love is completely stupid and senseless and without value, if sex is denied. The best it can do is to prepare the way for a sexually exciting game which never has any consequences; but it is just these consequences that give love its value. A completely intimate relationship with a beloved sexual partner is the only valid solution of the sexual problem. Only a courageous human being, however, is capable of experiencing real love.

The division of women into two types plays a similarly important rôle in the sex lives of men.

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There is the case of a man in his thirties who fell in love with a girl and decided to marry her. He had never had the least difficulty in his sexual life, but on the first night of his marriage he was impotent, and as he was incapable of having an erection for weeks afterward he consulted a psychotherapist. He related to his physician that before his marriage he had only had relations with prostitutes and 'kept women' but had no difficulty whatsoever in the sexual act. This type of sexual activity had completely satisfied him and the whole world of sex was conveniently and easily solved in this way. As he said, 'it left his head free to think of other more important things.' When asked whether he had ever fallen in love before he was thirty-eight years old, he was astonished at the question, and denied that he had. Up to the time of his marriage, women had been solely a convenience for his pleasure and he performed his sexual acts in much the same way that he performed the function of defecation. It was his feeling that one did not speak about these things because they were dirty.

When he met his future wife, he entered for the first time in his life into a tender relationship with a girl whom he had to regard as a human being. To treat this girl as he had always treated prostitutes naturally appeared perverse to him. Therefore he was impotent. This not at all uncommon method of

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solving the sexual problem by degrading it to the level of a physiological function is a common form of flight from the real sexual relation and coitus becomes no more than a substitute for ipsation. The experience of 'we' is the essence of love and requires the courage to surrender yourself to your partner. The spiritual and bodily satisfaction of the sexual partner is just as important as personal satisfaction in the true sexual embrace, and it is just at this point that a man's deep inner doubt of his own masculinity makes its appearance. The sexual satisfaction of a beloved woman is sensed as a decisive test of a man's sexual self-esteem. Many a man is afraid of this test: that is why such are impotent.

In another case, that of a young man of twenty-one, the division of women into a mother-type and into a prostitute-type was concretized without any previous reading of Otto Weininger. Toward the first type this young man was inhibited by timidity. He remembered quite conscious incest-fantasies of his childhood and he recalled that on the two occasions on which he failed in his coitus with women both partners bore a striking external similarity to his mother. Otherwise he was sexually very active and completely potent. After every act of intercourse – of course only with a member of the prostitute-type – he felt depressed for several days, and was unable to work because of his depression and irritation. The

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consequence was – and this was his purpose – that he immediately broke off relations with the girl, who while not usually a prostitute was a girl of 'easy virtue,' and began to seek another sexual conquest.

Here we see clearly a great fear of any emotional involvement and here also we can find the function of the incest-complex. The incest-complex serves the purpose of excluding, from the very beginning, all sex relations with women who might come into consideration for a genuine love-relationship. The incest-complex is not suppressed but is *quite consciously* used to this end. One boy believes that no one is quite like his mother and of course he cannot have sexual relations with his mother. He has worried a great deal, and for no reason at all, about his feminine looks and gestures, while his father, whom he has secretly opposed, seems very powerful to him and represents an apparently unattainable personality ideal.

It is worth calling attention to the important rôle which this contrasting concept of heavenly and mundane love plays in art and literature. It is a fiction to which the incest barrier may really have given the external stimulus and proffered the necessary material. The meaning of the contrast is to be found exclusively in the fact that the fear of sexual intercourse is the most practical philosophic *credo* of the

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faint-hearted. *It enables them to evade the love problem instead of solving it.*

There can never be an excess of love – usually there is not nearly enough love. It is true that sexual excesses occur, but these always remain in the category of ‘animal sexuality’ and occur only wherever real love has somehow been excluded. Wherever we look we can only see that people do not love enough.

Sexual perversions should not be hard to understand after our discussion of ipsation, impotence and frigidity. Let us begin by saying, in order to avoid all misunderstanding, that sexual acts of any kind, even though they deviate widely from normal sexual coitus – provided always that they occur between two members of opposite sex who love each other – are not to be considered as sexual perversions. We have no occasion whatsoever to lay down rules for the game of love. The procreation of children lies within the pattern of biological purpose, but not always and not under all circumstances does it fit into the personal pattern. The sexual embrace represents the mutual surrender of two human beings who mean everything to each other and wish to surrender themselves to each other, at least in that moment. It matters little how they do this – if they succeed, their technique is right. Nothing is ‘dirty’ or ‘perverse’ unless it is so sensed by the individuals who are



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involved, and as soon as it is felt as perverted it is not the 'right' way to make love.

### *Sexual Perversion*

There are however certain erotic practices which practically never occur on the basis of a real love-relationship. We know this from experience. Among these are sadistic and masochistic acts. These practices may therefore be considered true perversions, but they have nothing whatsoever to do with any congenital psychopathy and are to be considered as neurotic symptoms and treated as such. They are always based upon certain repeated childhood experiences in which an actively or passively experienced cruelty plays the chief rôle. The well-known example of J. J. Rousseau, who experienced sexual excitement the first time he was beaten by his aunt, Mlle Lambercier, and subsequently in his later life made 'so many Mlle Lamberciers' out of the women of his fantasy and those with whom he actually had relations, will serve to illustrate the fact. The question, whether this erotization of painful stimuli cannot be caused by an abnormal and congenitally fixed irradiation of sensations to the genital zone, may well be asked, and the fact that only a small minority of human beings who have been beaten in their childhood show masochistic tendencies later might indi-

cate an affirmative answer. But there is no evidence to make us assume that a primarily pathological mechanism exists.

It is better to assume that painful childhood impressions are elaborated into perversions only when they fit into the rest of the individual's pattern of life. For the boy Rousseau, the erotization of his pain was a clever trick for avoiding the humiliation of being beaten. Once he aroused the boundless admiration of his comrades by holding his hand in open fire in imitation of that brave Roman, C. Mucius Scævola. This is but another example of the same trick: to train himself in the suffering of pain and thus to build up and intensify his personal self-esteem. In the one situation he succeeded by being a hero, in the other by outwitting his punishing aunt by transforming her beating into a caress without her knowledge of the effect of her punishment on him. When the aunt realized that young Rousseau enjoyed his beatings, she ceased to beat him.

In the masochistic comedy of the adult there is a pattern-like reproduction of the childhood situation. Here a parent's tender spanking which the child has learned to bear, or has even provoked in order to feel himself the centre of attention, is substituted for the erotic fore-pleasure, and the beloved partner is forced into the rôle of a mother, solely with the presupposition that this fantasy is transformed into reality. Can

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the masochist enter into true sexual relations? This forced and farcical transformation of values precludes any real personal relation between the masochist and his partner even when the other lover is inclined to be sadistic. The exploited partner vanishes as a personality behind the smoke screen of the sado-masochistic ritual, and becomes unimportant. Here again we see an evasion, an exclusion of the essential personal factors of a love-relationship.

The omnipotent validity of the 'masculine-feminine' scheme of antithesis is unmistakable in sadistic-masochistic sexual congress. It is always the man who is cruel, the woman who is beaten, even when the rôles are actually changed. Sadistic behaviour is obviously a caricature of masculinity. Sadism is transparent both in men and women who use this means of putting a woman 'at their feet' and are willing to enter into sexual relations only when this fictional condition has been complied with. The masochistic man who shows a fantastic identification with an extremely feminine rôle, may desire to disclose his latent masculinity in the sexual act. The woman who allows herself to be beaten exaggerates her femininity, because she believes that the rôle of a complete slave is the only one she can play. In surrendering herself to the brutality of her man, she chains him to her, finding satisfaction in the experi-

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ence of the exaggerated strength of the man who belongs to her.

It is worth noting that in our masculine civilization the sadistic rôle is more or less normally laid down for the man, while women are regularly forced into the masochistic rôle, so that these perversions are, in reality, no more than caricatures of our actual social relations. The timid, virginal woman whose mere existence is tolerated only by virtue of the strength of her man, is the erotic ideal of a decadent and vanishing civilization. It has vanished to such an extent that when we find a woman who fits this ideal now-a-days we consider her the product of profound discouragement, while when we discover a really sadistic man we are inclined to believe that his forced super-manliness betrays a secret weakness. Sado-masochistic relationships which were appropriate to a bygone age, are but the hollow shell of sexual relationships to-day and carry within themselves the germs of the most bitter conflicts.

Other perversions found in the sexual life of to-day must be considered one by one, but what we have said about sadism and masochism applies to them also: first, that the material of which all perversions are built up is based upon childhood experiences, and second, that the meaning of all perversions, whether they exist alone or serve as introductions to sexual relations, is always an evasion of a personal intimacy

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that appears too dangerous. Even where sexual union occurs it is the perverse practice which is emphasized and valued, not the sexual partner.

*The Meaning of Homosexuality*

Homosexuality, because it is so widespread and has such great practical importance, occupies a position of exceptional interest and deserves special discussion. This perversion, which seems to be more strongly rooted in historical and contemporary thought, apparently refutes the concepts of Individual Psychology, and seems to elude our interpretation. The general consensus of opinion is that there is a congenital disposition toward homosexuality which predestines the majority of the affected individuals to a certain type of sexual behaviour. This seems to be largely corroborated by the fact that some homosexuals do not feel sick or degenerate, but are perfectly satisfied with their sexual life and do not desire to change it. As a matter of fact it is well worth noting that homosexuals, in contrast to all other mentally ill individuals, organize themselves into communities and demand a representative culture of their own which many consider superior in some respects to a heterosexual civilization. Homosexuals sometimes indicate, with almost 'patriotic' pride, that a number of exceptional men were actually or apparently homosexual. This is a very weak

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argument, because some of the greatest men of all time have been epileptics, psychotics, profound neurotics, and perverts of every variety. No one would consider epilepsy or insanity as a great cultural boon simply because certain famous men have been epileptic or insane.

There is one fact which distinguishes homosexuality from other perversions, and that is that homosexual relations apparently have the characteristics of a true human society. There are homosexual 'marriages' that last a lifetime, and could serve as models of warmth and tenderness to normally married, heterosexual couples. In these cases we must admit that the personal bond seems not to be subordinated to the sexual practice.

It is difficult to say whether there is a congenital predisposition to homosexuality. This predisposition, often considered parallel to physical hermaphroditism (which occasionally occurs), is spoken of as a psychic hermaphroditism. There are two types of physical hermaphroditism; the one, a rare, genuine hermaphroditism in which ovaries as well as testicles exist in the same individual; and the other, the far more common pseudo-hermaphroditism in which the sexual glands of one sex are present, but the external sexual organs together with secondary sexual characteristics are like those of the opposite sex. It is assumed that there are cases parallel to this

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pseudo-hermaphroditism, in which not only the secondary sexual characteristics of the other sex are present, but that a correlated psychic disposition to act like the other sex also exists. Finally there is said to be another form in which *only* the psychic tendencies of the 'other' sex are present. The latter form includes the numerous homosexuals who show no physical signs of the 'other' sex. Those who hold these views emphasize the fact that an extraordinary number of pseudo-hermaphrodites are to be found among homosexuals and claim that this is an evidence of an inner relationship between the psychic tendencies and the physical structure.

There is no direct refutation of this argument. In view of the fact that a normal interest in the other sex is doubtless congenital in normal people, even though it appears only in the course of development, we must grant the possibility of the existence of a homosexual interest in place of the normal disposition, especially where the individual shows sexual characteristics of the opposite sex. This argument is weakened to a considerable degree by the fact that very masculine men and very feminine women – indeed, especially such individuals – are to be found among the homosexuals. Furthermore we cannot overlook the fact that there are a tremendous number of completely normal human beings who experienced transient homosexual tendencies during their adoles-

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cence but, since that time, have been entirely normal in their sexual feelings. The Freudian assumption that there is a bisexual predisposition in every human being would explain this very well; but it is hardly astonishing that the Freudian theory (which attempts to explain sex only and no other human activity) should apparently explain homosexuality so glibly, because it was created precisely to this end. The Freudian theory simply gives new names to well-known facts, claims that they originate in a hereditary predisposition, and no more. Moreover it is very astonishing to find that homosexuality, which is claimed to be a natural variant of human behaviour, should be so specifically and uniquely human. Single homosexual acts have been observed, it is true, among animals, especially among dogs, but these tendencies are a form of masturbation. No one has ever seen an animal which was exclusively homosexual.

As a matter of fact the argument which is the chief support of the thesis that homosexuality is inborn : namely, that it occurs in the presence of the sexual characteristics of the opposite sex, can be interpreted in quite another way. Attention has been called in a previous paragraph to the child's valuation of his own sexual rôle. The prevailing exaggeration of the importance of the masculine rôle is assumed by the child and utilized as a criterion of his sense of self-



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esteem. Therefore when a boy looks like a girl, or when a girl looks like a boy, or when a boy is especially beautiful or when a girl is unusually ugly, these qualities are equivalent to organ-inferiorities. When a boy is constantly teased with the fact that he looks like a girl it is a source of never-ending embarrassment and discouragement to him. There is always a possibility that such a boy will make a virtue out of his weakness, and accept the feminine rôle which nature and his environment seem to have forced upon him. Homosexuality is but a step along his future path.

The fantastic belief of little girls that they can transform themselves into boys is frequently given a powerful stimulus if they actually look like boys, or if they are so ugly that they cannot expect to compete very well with other girls. In these cases a subsequent homosexuality is the direct consequence of the girl's masculine protest. It is simpler to explain why all boys and girls who have some of the characteristics of the opposite sex do not become homosexual, than it is to explain the fact that some of them do become homosexual by assuming the existence of a homosexual disposition. An individual's pattern of life cannot be determined by one factor alone. Our sexual attitudes and interests are determined not only by our physical constitution, but by other environmental and vital influences, and especially by the

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degree of encouragement or discouragement which we derive from our environment and our experiences.

A history of seduction (and especially the practice of mutual masturbation *inter nates* among boys which often awakens a boy to the fact that he can share genital pleasure with others) is very common in the early lives of many homosexuals. Naturally, only a small portion of the boys who practise mutual masturbation later become homosexuals and, according to our point of view, only those for whom the path has been channelled by discouragement and pessimism about their own sexual rôle, do become homosexuals. These same boys are also those who are most affected by seduction.

From a sociological and psychological point of view it is noteworthy that complete inversion, with total lack of feeling for the opposite sex, is incomparably more common among women than among men, and this fact does not fit at all into the hypothesis of a congenital disposition, especially where complete inversion is concerned. On the contrary, it is easy to interpret this fact from the psychological point of view because the acquisition of a 'masculine' style of life in a woman demands a great deal of courage, whereas, on the contrary, the assumption of a 'feminine' style of life is the expression of profound discouragement in a man. This accounts for the fact that, in an age in which women are still so far from

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being the equivalent of men as they are to-day, it is only the very extraordinary woman whose waning self-esteem permits her the expression of such an emphatic gesture as complete inversion. If we are right in our premise it is probable that the next generations in the progressive emancipation of women will show an increase in the number of women who will be complete invert. We may also expect an increase in the number of male homosexuals because the growing emancipation of women has fundamentally increased the male's fear of a close sexual relationship.

### *Homosexuality as a Neurotic Symptom*

Without claiming that our discussion is a complete refutation of the theory that homosexuality is due to a congenital predisposition, we do propose a pragmatic working hypothesis. The theory that homosexuality is congenital helps no one. If it could be proved (which has not yet been done), we should have to accept it. On the contrary, our view is *that homosexuality, as it occurs in the life of an individual, may be the symptom and expression of a false goal in life*. This enables us to help those homosexuals who suffer because of their homosexuality and would gladly be rid of it. It is for this reason that we prefer our hypothesis.

Once we have accepted this hypothesis as a work-

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ing basis we shall find a number of facts in the lives of homosexuals which readily corroborate assumptions. For example, there is the fact that a really homosexual man is apparently more feminine than any woman in his habits, gestures, and vices. There is no limit to the vanity of homosexuals in dress, cosmetics, and the like. The homosexual man usually uses much more perfume than a woman of his own social class, and he is not only the equal of any woman in cowardice, deception, gossip and meanness, but beats her at her own game. Naturally this does not hold for all homosexuals, but only for a large group of them, especially the 'organized' homosexuals who have their clubs in the big cities. In these homosexual communities there is a kind of competition in femininity whose results are indeed bizarre. The mark of voluntary desire and arrangement is apparent in the homosexual's exaggeration of his 'femininity.' The purpose is obvious. These homosexual men actually do not act like women — they are 'womanish,' female, in the worst sense of the word. A comparable strained masculinity is to be found among Lesbians.

So far as work and accomplishment is concerned, it is significant that masculine homosexuals are commonly lazy and incapable, whereas feminine homosexuals are usually more capable than the average woman. Their contrary sexual characters cannot

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explain this phenomenon, for there is no reason why a homosexual clerk should be less capable than his normal colleague *simply* because he is homosexual, especially as laziness is not a constant, secondary sexual characteristic even in women. The facts can be explained however by our working hypothesis that homosexuality in men is a sign of discouragement, whereas homosexuality in women, although a symptom of an exaggerated 'masculine protest,' is nevertheless a relatively courageous attitude. This also explains why homosexuality among women is a relatively unimportant aberration, whereas among men it is more commonly, if not always, a sign of a profound character anomaly.

We have no desire to hinder legal reformers who are attempting to remove the criminal status of homosexuality from the law books when we enter our pragmatic denial that homosexuality is a congenital disease. We consider every piece of criminal (sexual) legislation false and vicious if it extends beyond the protection of minors, the maintenance of public decency, and the prohibition of public nuisances. It is our feeling that when we make homosexuality a legal crime we open the door to blackmailers. Nevertheless, it is our belief that the courageous legal reformers who are attempting to modify the legislation on homosexuality might well use the argument that the homosexual should be helped, and

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not punished, and that those homosexuals who do not suffer from their tendencies should be prevented from harming anyone else. The propagation of theories that homosexuality is an incurable hereditary disease, however, does inestimable damage to those homosexuals who are suffering from their tendencies.

## CHAPTER VI

### SEX EDUCATION

IN the foregoing incomplete bird's-eye view of the whole subject of sex and love we have attempted to show that a man's sexual behaviour is inseparably linked in organic relationship to his total life. It has been our purpose to demonstrate that no human activity, not even the most elementary instinctive reaction, can be divorced or isolated from the pattern of a man's personality, or interpreted without reference to his personal goal in life. In this way Individual Psychology gives us a new understanding of the various manifestations of sex which other investigators have failed to discover up to the present, because they have studied sex solely from a biological and causal point of view.

Other investigations therefore have not proceeded beyond the description of man's sexual behaviour and its parallels in the animal world. Consequently no real understanding of human sex relations has ever been obtained from these purely descriptive investigations. To understand sex manifestations it is necessary to interpret them in terms of their purpose and meaning as means to the attainment of the individual's goal in life. We believe that this conative point of view is vitally necessary in any discussion of

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sex because only when we see the purpose of sexual acts and correlate them in the organic constellation of the central personality, can they be understood.

From a practical point of view, our investigation shows that each individual is responsible for his own sexual behaviour, even where it has been the custom to believe in the irresponsibility of blind passion and elementary instincts. We do not mean responsibility in a moral sense. Individual Psychology, like Medicine, is a science which must posit normative values, but these values do not belong to any moral category. Moral values are transcendental and not the province of physicians. When we speak of a human being responsible for his commissions and omissions, we mean simply that his acts are logically attributable to *him*: that it is in each case *his* act or omission. If he justifies himself, Individual Psychology can measure the degree of social feeling in his act according to the criteria of mental science. Once the individual has learned to have insight into his acts he can calmly let the consequences follow. Individual Psychology seeks neither to threaten nor to damn him.

It is our belief that a thorough-going utilization of the method of Individual Psychology incorporates the essential factors of proper sex education. Just as the sexual life cannot be wrenched from its foundations in the total personality if it is to be understood,



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so sexual education cannot be divorced from general education. Our only purpose in writing this short chapter is to show some of these relationships in greater detail. The reader who really understands the interrelation of sex and personality patterns will find specific advice in sexual education superfluous, while anyone who does not understand these fundamental relativities will not understand how to enlighten a child sexually, no matter how specific our suggestions might be.

### *The Goals of Sex Education*

Let us delimit the psychological task in sexual education. What we desire to teach a child about sex is just this: *the correct sexual behaviour is that which furthers the commonweal*. Our programme might then follow the chapter headings of our book, and could be epitomized in the four following statements:

1. *Sexuality* cannot demand autonomy, or 'special privilege' within the central personality. It is not a 'state within a state.' Sex is subordinate to the central personality, and responsible to it.
2. *Reproduction* is the (chief) biological purpose of sex. Parenthood is also a part of the personal purpose of a great majority of men and women and coincides with the demands of society, as a proper goal of life.

3. *Sex and character* are interrelated, in part biologically, but principally along sociological lines. It is a fallacious tendency of present-day civilization to value men and masculinity at the expense of women and femininity. It is to the advantage of the self-esteem of men and women alike to correct this common tendency.
4. *Love* is the best and most adequate form of profound personal union between men and women in our civilization. It is the premise of sexual contact which is open only to courageous and responsible individuals capable of a complete surrender of their ego.

This formulation could serve as the basis of a pedagogical programme. It would not do to learn these statements by heart; it is necessary to *experience* them. For this reason the teacher of sex should begin by teaching himself.

As a matter of fact, every false view and every incorrect personal action on the part of the parent or teacher inexorably exerts a vicious influence on the children he teaches. A parent or teacher who personifies his sexuality as an evil demon against whom he has waged a bitter and only partially successful fight all his life, will sooner or later drive the children he is teaching into the very conflicts of ambivalence which he has himself experienced. That parent or

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teacher who sees the fertility of woman as an unwished for complication of his erotic pleasure – because he is pessimistic or pleasure-hungry, will insinuate his belief, that one should attempt to avoid the responsibility for the consequences of sexual intercourse into the minds of his children – even if he never speaks about it openly to them. Such a teacher may thus cause his children to lose their most important opportunity of finding value in their lives. That parent or teacher who believes in the traditional prejudice that women are second-rate men, will transfer this valuation to the children whom he teaches even though he does not wish to do so consciously. He will thus be responsible in part for the insecurity of the girls, and for the anxious prestige-hunger of the boys in his care. Finally, any teacher who has avoided the consummation of love in sexual surrender for fear that he might lose his little ego, will teach his children to do likewise, with the result that they will seek sexuality without love, without friendship, and without true sexual feeling.

Perhaps we are doing an injustice in emphasizing the relationship between the mistakes of parents and teachers and the same sexual mistakes in their children. It might appear that sex is in itself a special pedagogic sphere even as regards unconscious pedagogic influences. We wish to avoid such an imputa-

tion. Nothing is farther from the truth. On the contrary, it is not difficult to demonstrate how every mistake in general education shows its bad influence on the behaviour of the child, including his sexual behaviour.

The model child will regulate his sexual behaviour in a pedantic fashion according to the clock and the calendar. He will regard his relations to his sexual partner from the standpoint of justice and duty, until some day, caught in some unforeseen temptation, he will be involved in a wild and uninhibited sexual orgy. The boy who is a rebel against the authority of his father will give chase to women with the imposing gestures of a conqueror regarding them as exotic and costly prey. He will never be satiated with sex, and never happy in a true love-relationship. The child of parents who always nagged and argued will always be timid and inhibited, and will but seldom achieve a good relationship to the other sex, because he will never be able to lose himself in love for fear that he will make a mistake. The pampered child will be pampered in love, always taking and never giving, and placing the sexual partner in the service of his dependency. The hated child will be incapable of any deep personal bond to the sexual partner and will therefore have to satisfy himself with the shabby left-overs of purely physical sex.

There is a great temptation to trace the childhood

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pattern of life into the love-life of the adult. Could we do this completely it would demonstrate the validity of our first premise – the primacy of the personal goal, in love, as in life. It would prove beyond a question of a doubt that 'as a man loves so he is.' Perhaps we ought to add that the difficulties of life and correct living appear earlier and more sharply defined in the sphere of sex than in any other sphere of life. Medical and everyday clinical experience attests the truth of this statement. Love is the cleavage plane along which the individuality, with all its unevennesses and inadequacies, is split out of the huge block of the community. Perhaps it is less difficult to make contacts in spheres other than the sexual. Only a small amount of co-operation, tolerance, tact, trust, and objectivity, are required to get along in life. But in love a real surrender is required, and spiritual and physical intimacy are the necessary premises of success. This is a task much too difficult for the egoist who is afraid of lowering the defences of his personality. It is for this reason that an adult's success in sex and love are the best indicators of the success or failure of his training as a child.

### *Sexual 'Domestication'*

What we may call 'domestication' is an important factor in sexual education. We mean by this, that type of training which used to be the chief purpose

of a traditional and authoritative education; the desiderata which individual psychology has neglected, perhaps, because of its opposition to blind authority. Yet these problems are of interest to the individual psychologist just because they are not easily solved. How do you educate a child to be clean? To be orderly? To be considerate of his fellows? To be punctual? To have a sense of duty and responsibility? The Adlerian psychologist has never considered it his duty to treat symptoms. The function of Individual Psychology is to give the child a correct orientation and count on it that this general rightness of point of view will be applied automatically to all the single problems that arise.

There is one difficulty which we should not overlook, and that is that orderliness, cleanliness and the like, are partial manifestations of the social feeling. So far as the social feeling is properly developed, in so far will the child be orderly, considerate, and the like. Nevertheless, the average parent or teacher cannot wait so long with every child, if for no other reason than that a neighbour's children will have accomplished a great deal by following out the traditional training. There is a danger, therefore, that the child educated according to Individual Psychology will find himself retarded in comparison with others. If an inferiority feeling is created in this way, it might, under circumstances, destroy the very thing

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we have achieved by our correct method of education. Naturally we wish to save the child any such experience. We have occasionally pointed out the fact that there are some problems, such as educating a child to control urination and defecation, that are not very simple in practice. When a child is very young he cannot be trained without some authority, even though this authority is exercised in the kindest fashion.

In the matter of sex there is a similar problem of domestication: that is the problem of modesty. No one knows precisely how modesty developed within historic periods open to anthropological research. One theory, mentioned in a previous chapter, is that modesty originated when man began to walk upright and was compelled to protect his exposed genitals. It is also possible that modesty originated when stricter laws governing sexual intercourse were substituted for previously existent promiscuous sex relations. The change may have been effected because of economic reasons, and perhaps because the covering of the sexual organs was a symbolic sign of the taboo of sex. It is possible that modesty, by excluding the exhibitionistic stimulus, made obedience to the law easier. Other views, based on the modern realization that covering the sexual organs increases the erotic lure, are possible explanations. Whatever its origin it is probable that modesty is a relatively

recent acquisition in the phylogenesis of the human race. In any case modesty is not a hereditary instinct to the extent that we can count on its spontaneous appearance in children. Yet modesty is a desirable and necessary quality which an older child who does not wish to excite antagonism outside his own family should possess.

### *Some Difficulties in Sex Education*

Our chief difficulty as educators lies in the fact that we do not know what example to give the child. If parents are afraid to undress in front of their young children, they direct the child's curiosity to the very place where he is prohibited from seeing something. This puts an extraordinary emphasis on the sexual organs, which is far from good. It is our task to make the child un-self-conscious about sex because every unmotivated attempt at hiding gives our efforts a sensational colour. If we forgo all modesty and go about nude in front of the child (and this is very difficult to many parents because of their personal prejudices), our example will hardly lead the child, simply and effectively, to real modesty.

The solution of the problem lies in the gradual transition from un-self-conscious nudity to modesty during the child's growth. The limits are hard to define in an individual case, especially when there



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are several children, of various ages, in a family. An occasional discussion of the theme enables a child to understand the rules of society and social convention, which should usually be followed. This will be difficult now and then because prevailing rules of modesty are not at all logical. And yet because they are very strict rules, we shall often have to answer the child's 'Why?' with the undesirable answer: 'It isn't being done.'

The discussion of modesty usually falls into the general discussion of sexual facts. Individual Psychology teaches that you must never tell a child 'You don't understand that yet,' or answer him with some obvious falsehood. We believe in the principle of fair play in the sexual education of a child. There is no ground other than the false modesty of an adult for lying to a child when he asks where children come from, and certainly false modesty is a bad attitude for a parent or educator to take. A child has the right to know the answer to his question and we must answer him sincerely. We must answer his questions, furthermore, without any sanctimonious solemnity about the 'sacredness' of sex, which many parents use to veil their own perplexity. The question must be answered in the same objective way that we would answer a child who asks the source of flour or paper. If we answer in this way the child will respond with an objective interest, free of all false modesty. Just

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because modesty is foreign to a child up to a certain age, it is desirable to have educated the child step by step to a realization of sexual facts so that the whole question will have been closed by the time the child becomes conscious of sex, secretive, and too timid to ask questions about it.

The first question that a child asks is usually 'Where do children come from?' and this question may be asked in his fourth year or even earlier. A few years later the child will ask 'What is the difference between boys and girls?' although any child who has had the opportunity of close contact with other boys and girls will have answered this question for himself. The last questions are, 'How do children get into the mother's body?' and 'What does the father do?' It is impossible to avoid a discussion of the act of sexual intercourse, but it can usually be stated very simply and in a few words. In the discussion of this matter of sexual differences it is wise also to discuss modesty and to teach the child that social convention taboos the open discussion of sexual matters.

Subsequent discussion of sexual questions usually occurs just before puberty. If the child has learned so much that he does not actually ask sexual questions at this time it may occasionally be the duty of parents to broach the subject. If a girl has not learned about menstruation previously, she should be prepared at

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this time. Both boys and girls should be taught the hygienic damage that may be wrought by premature sexual experiences during early adolescence. Finally, at this time when boys and girls are capable of sexual intercourse, the discussion of venereal disease and its prophylaxis, of prostitution and the means of avoiding contact with prostitutes, is unconditionally necessary. The discussion of these matters is far better done too early than too late. Parents should speak about ipsation only if the child asks about it, or if there are obvious indications that the child is suffering because of his ipsation. We have already discussed a case which shows how an ipsating boy can be helped. The object is not to tell him how to abandon ipsation successfully, but to disclose the origins of the habit in a previous discouragement, and to show him how this discouragement can be obviated. In the discussion of sex let us be as open and above board as possible!

### *Value of Co-education*

A few words may well be said in this connection about co-education. Co-education is unmistakably advantageous during kindergarten and elementary school age. Its value should not be depreciated because one can occasionally find sexual tension between boys and girls at an early age. This sexual

tension is not really sexual at all, even when the children play the 'bride and bridegroom' game with a great deal of secrecy and mystery. The source of the tension, and the reason why friendships between boys and girls seldom exist before the age of ten years, is no more than the previously discussed double standard of value for the two sexes. Children learn this double standard at an early age. The inferiority feeling of a girl and the masculine gestures of a boy exist in non-co-educational schools as well as in co-educational institutions. In the co-educational school experience in making contacts with children of the opposite sex has the advantage of lessening the distance which is formed between the sexes during this period, by developing greater confidence and trust between boys and girls. The success of a co-educational school depends very largely upon the teacher and his attitude toward the children. If the teacher is caught in the toils of old prejudices, and makes the superiority of the boys a fixed class-room institution and sometimes punishes a boy by making him sit with the girls, he does more damage than co-education can repair. On the other hand, the teacher with good insight can lessen the existent tensions and avoid the exaggeration of sexual differences by an occasional friendly talk on the theme of 'boys and girls.'

In higher schools co-education seems to us very

advantageous, especially where there are good teachers, and boys and girls attend in approximately equal numbers. Under these circumstances co-education enables us to institute an open comradeship during the adolescent and post-adolescent period, and this comradeship is the best guarantee against erotic conflicts and adventures. The 'youth movement' in Germany has accomplished a great deal in this direction. Naturally, erotic relationships between a young man and woman are entirely possible between the sixteenth and the eighteenth years, and sexual intercourse not infrequently occurs.

The horror that greets sexual relations between young men and women before marriage is obviously very marked only among bourgeois mothers. Amongst the urban poor, and in rural populations, the worst thing that happens to a girl who has had sex relations is that she is scolded for 'beginning so early.' The complete facts are finally taken for what they are worth and tacitly sanctioned. Nothing really happens to the girl. It is a fact that now-a-days there is a transition of morals and manners towards greater sexual freedom. Even girls of 'good families' demand greater sexual liberties, and there are mothers and fathers who cannot bear to see this change. We may sympathize with these parents, and actually it is a very difficult experience for some of them; but we

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cannot help them, because the wheel of evolution cannot be turned back.

### *The New Sexual Morality*

The sooner we recognize the new morals and orient our pedagogic attitude toward our children according to the new code, the better it will be for everyone concerned. Even to-day it is almost useless to paint the picture of 'sins' against the prevailing moral code in very black colours to young men and women. Either we push them into severe conflicts of conscience, or they laugh at us in secret. It would be more important and far more useful to appeal to their sense of responsibility, without uttering any expressed command or prohibition. Let us point out the serious consequences of pregnancy at an early age, not the dangers of immorality, and above all let us awaken the erotic conscience of our children in the direction of using their sexual pleasure not as a goal in itself but as a means to the attainment of proper relationships to the other sex. Sexual pleasure in itself is right only when the sexual relation is based on a really deep and profound personal love and understanding between a man and woman. It is this love and understanding, and not sexual abstinence, which is important.

What of the dangers of sexual precocity? In our

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large cities we have many opportunities of observing premature sexual maturity and in the poor quarters it is not unusual to find twelve- and thirteen-year-old girls who have had sexual intercourse. We find their behaviour, quite aside from their sexual delinquency, is not very good, and this seems to corroborate the belief that premature sexual intercourse leads to all-round delinquency. As a matter of fact delinquency and sexual precocity are probably correlated. Sexual precocity which usually appears as child-prostitution is no more than a partial manifestation of general neglect and delinquency. Pleasure-hunger and fear of work together with an inadequate social feeling, all products of poverty, are responsible for the fact that such children not only steal when they can in order to buy little luxuries with their ill-gotten gains, but also that they do not hesitate to take up prostitution if the opportunity offers, or seduction points the way to this easy and pleasant profession. It is not hard to understand why the depraving experiences of childhood prostitution thrust poor young girls even farther into general neglect and delinquency, and make work in school seem unimportant and insignificant. And for this same reason we can understand why attempts in mental hygiene and child guidance meet so much resistance from these girls. Guidance of these girls will succeed only under the condition that the psychiatrist maintains

an attitude of comradely benevolence, and shows true respect for the personality of the child despite her mistakes. This, not strict punishment and moral preachments, must be the basis of our attitude toward the delinquent girl.

It seems to us, therefore, that actually there is no greater danger of premature sexual delinquency than of general juvenile delinquency. But there is a danger of general, including sexual delinquency, because of poverty and neglect. The prophylaxis of sexual delinquency, therefore, must be directed against the neglect which leads to delinquency, and proper prophylactic measures should be social and economic rather than primarily medical or pedagogical. Sexual delinquency in children is almost exclusively the product of poverty, of overcrowding, and of neglect, and will always be found in slums as long as the slum environment exists.

Sexual precocity occurs occasionally as a pathological manifestation of early childhood, in which case it sets up a very difficult problem to solve. Such pathological cases cannot be described in an introductory book, as they are exceptional and rare. It is our concern, however, to know whether precocious development of sexual desire can be produced by external stimuli, such as the 'movies' with their lascivious posters, or by cheap erotic magazines and books. Although we do not believe that precocious



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sexuality can be evoked by these means, it probably can be fostered by them. We can always distinguish a small group of children who are affected by bad 'movies' from a greater group who are unaffected by these influences. Those who are affected are always the very children who have previously tended in this direction because of other unfavourable factors in their family constellation. While it is undesirable to give these children a further push toward the abyss, nevertheless we do not believe that the success of strict censorship of cinemas and magazines is very great. It is our contention, again, that social service and care is a thousand times more important in the development of good sexual morals than any castration of public life. When we let human beings eat decently, live comfortably, and occasionally allow themselves the luxury of a good book or a visit to the theatre, we have done the most important thing.

Are there any pedagogic rules and principles which are particularly applicable to the period of adolescence? Only one: adolescence, more than any other period of a child's life, demands that parents and teachers maintain an attitude of indestructible friendship and trustworthiness toward their charges. Adolescence is an age of greatest isolation, and if parents and teachers can maintain their comradely attitude of trust and understanding until the thresh-

hold of transition into adult life has been passed, the adolescent will carry on by himself beyond that point. To be sure it is difficult to maintain this attitude because, at just this time, the adolescent has a definite tendency to isolate himself, and any solicitude or compulsion on the part of parents or teachers is false. Moreover, the adolescent inclines to revolt, becomes hypersensitive, and often acts in a completely impossible fashion during these critical years. It is really no easy task to maintain patience and an unchanged attitude of friendliness toward the adolescent. The problem is best solved by parents who are spiritually young enough not to resist and struggle stupidly against these manifestations of adolescence. Good parents must possess sufficient inner poise and security to avoid losing their heads in the useless struggle to maintain their prestige and authority over their children. Under these circumstances the relation of mutual confidence between parent and child is of inestimable value to the adolescent.

We are at the end. Some important problems have not been answered because of the scope of this book, and others have been but briefly sketched. We believe, nevertheless, that we have made a small contribution to the understanding of sex psychology. We should consider our reward very great if any reader who has found a paragraph or phrase which has given him new insight, or helped him in his own thinking

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and conduct, did not keep that insight to himself. Let those who have learned from our discussions share their knowledge with others who are still groping. Let the truth live.

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